

CBD NEWS

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Forever Free

Puzzles & Trivia P25



Melbourne rejoice! Photo by John Tadigiri

After months of being confined to their homes, visitors flocked to the city on October 22 to enjoy their newly returned freedoms, as Lord Mayor Sally Capp (left) and Federation Square CEO Caroline Ralphsmith (third from left) celebrated alongside staff and customers at Big Esso. *More on page 11.*

Push for a better-designed city welcomes local input

The City of Melbourne's newly appointed Design Excellence Advisory Committee brings together industry experts, academics and community members to work through design challenges and opportunities facing Melbourne. CBD News spoke with two locals who form part of the inaugural committee.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

It's been described as a "game changer" for Melbourne.

And while the exact changes won't be discernible immediately, the new Design Excellence Advisory Committee (DEAC) has a simple mantra: design that benefits the community, not just developers.

"Average" is no longer good enough when it comes to architecture, design and urban amenity in Melbourne," Deputy Lord Mayor and the council's planning chair Nicholas Reece said in October.

"Average" does not cut it in recovery mode for the world's most liveable city ... we want to see streets and squares as beautiful as Amsterdam, a skyline that is as classy as Chicago and a design culture that is as hardcore as Copenhagen — all done in a Melbourne way."

With that in mind, the DEAC will feature a range of "advisors" (such as Eureka Tower architect Karl Fender), "technical experts" (such as Infrastructure Australia CEO Romilly Madew) and, importantly, members of the community.

One of those is Nivedita Ravindran.

A qualified architect and urban designer, Ms Ravindran came to Melbourne three years ago as an international student to complete her

masters degree and is now employed within the city.

Her appointment to the DEAC came as a surprise, and she believed her first-hand experience living in the CBD was crucial.

"Being residents of the CBD we get to tell them what works on the ground; it's the experience of people who actually live here," she said.

"They're really receptive of these opinions of the 'end user', which I think is really good."

Originally from Chennai in India, Ms Ravindran said a number of design elements in Melbourne made the city an attractive place to live such as small-scale retail fronts and activations, plus green spaces that, while not as large as those outside the city, were of "high quality and are well maintained".

However, she had noticed things that could be improved, particularly at the pedestrian level.

This included more opportunities to walk "through" a block rather than around it, less imposing walls of concrete or glass, and generally "activating the ground plane".

"[It's about] making use of the under-used spaces like car parks and undercrofts, under bridges — there's a lot of potential in these spaces, which we have a lot of."

She also subscribed to the belief that design was about nailing the basics.

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Mooted tower near QVM could destroy iconic art laneway

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

An iconic street art laneway in Melbourne's CBD could face the wrecking ball after the City of Melbourne approved plans to build an adjoining 41-storey tower development.

The 133-metre mixed-use tower near the Queen Victoria Market (QVM) proposes to have shops, 267 apartments, offices and a publicly accessible basketball court.

The proposed site is currently home to the five-storey Burbank House as well as two double-storey brick warehouses and a three-storey brick building, some of which were built in the early 1900s and would be partially demolished under the plans.

However, developer Landreams will need the final nod from the state government to get the project at 100-106

Franklin St off the ground, after City of Melbourne councillors voted unanimously in favour of the development at their October 19 meeting.

GU Investments Group Pty Ltd and Burbank Holdings currently own the land which is affected by heritage overlay.

The plans were discussed at length during the council meeting after concerns were raised that Blender Lane, a famous street art laneway which has attracted local and international artists, would be partially destroyed and widened to make way for the tower.

Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece conceded the proposal had presented a "complex conundrum for our planning system", but believed the development would "deliver a vibrant, buzzing new laneway for Melbourne".

"There is a tricky balance to be struck here between *Continued on page 4.*

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The deadline for the December/January edition is November 18.

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Bid for 50 new CBD poker machines as councillor slams government delay

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

An application for 50 new CBD poker machines has been lodged with the City of Melbourne which, if approved, would see the number of licensed machines within the Hoddle Grid alone exceed 600.

Lodged in October by Bay Road Hotel Pty Ltd, the application sought to convert the basement, ground and rooftop level of the 19-floor 388 Lonsdale St into a hotel.

The building, which currently features commercial and serviced apartments, would house 50 new electronic gaming machines on the ground floor.

It specified that the pokies' location would not be prominent.

"There is no access to the gaming room from Hardware St," it said.

"Patrons must enter via Lonsdale St and walk through the cafe before making a conscious decision to enter the gaming room."

While it was yet to be formally advertised, there was uncertainty about which gaming policy would apply to the application.

In August 2019, the City of Melbourne submitted a planning scheme amendment to replace the current gaming policy.

However, after two years it is still to be approved by the Minister for Planning.

While the council does not have the power to reject poker machine applications outright, the new amendment, titled C366, would "strengthen policy to reduce the concentration of electronic gaming machines in the Hoddle Grid where they contribute to convenience gaming".

It would also enable a "more comprehensive assessment of the social and economic impacts of gaming" and "assist in guiding the appropriate location and operation of gaming venues".



▲ The subject site at 388 Lonsdale St.

Greens Cr Rohan Leppert said the delay was "ridiculous".

"The amendment has sat on the Planning Minister's desk without approval for over two years. This delay prevents clarity to developers, the community and council planners," he said.

"The state government needs to stop obfuscating its approach to gambling, stop wasting ratepayer funds, and approve the amendment."

"When 'fast track planning' is the mantra we hear from the state government, a 26-month delay on approving straightforward updates to a local planning policy is ridiculous."

A government spokesperson told *CBD News* that approval could be expected soon.

"The assessment of Amendment C366 is at an advanced stage and a decision will be made in due course," the spokesperson said.

If successful, the Lonsdale St application

“

The state government needs to stop obfuscating its approach to gambling, stop wasting ratepayer funds, and approve the amendment.

”

would see poker machines installed just 240 metres from the nearest licensed venue (The Meeting Place on Elizabeth St).

While the rest of Victoria is subject to caps on the number of poker machines per postcode, there is no mandated limit in the CBD, Docklands and Southbank.

Councillors have previously expressed frustration about their limited powers over poker machine numbers.

"Of course, I'd like to go a whole lot further," Cr Leppert said in 2017.

"Of course, I'd like to have the power to disallow new electronic gaming machines in the City of Melbourne. We do not have that power."

According to the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, the average amount spent on pokies per adult in the City of Melbourne in 2019-2020 was \$344 ●



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M / FW

Push for a better-designed city welcomes local input

Continued from page 1.

“I want to ensure that design excellence is prioritised in every project, not just the ones of state significance. We’ve already spoken about minor changes that could happen at your front porch or on the street level that could have a really big impact for the public.”

Joining Ms Ravindran on the committee is fellow CBD local Daniel Ong.

The only DEAC member without a background in architecture or design, Mr Ong believed he had a unique perspective to offer.

“I represent the kind of citizen who’s working in another field but is nonetheless very engaged and invested in the debate that’s happening in the city, and eager to learn about that,” he told *CBD News*.

He referred to a quote in the council’s design excellence documents that reads: “Cities with a strong design culture are underpinned by an engaged and demanding public with high expectations for design quality”.

“There’s no mention of a public with design qualifications,” he said.

“Most of us don’t. Design education and engagement is a journey that I’m personally part of and enjoying. My goal would be to encourage people to be similar advocates and take people on a journey with me. If I can learn about design then I think it should be a highly accessible venture that anyone can undertake ... it’s about teaching people new words and vocabulary — a new language that they can take into their everyday, and notice details and opportunities they hadn’t noticed before. And I think that’s exciting. So, hopefully I’m there to represent the every person.”

Born in Singapore and raised in Melbourne, Mr Ong’s professional roles include stints in defence at the federal level and (currently) anti-corruption at the state level.

He has lived in the CBD for six years (from 2017 to now, and during 2002-03), plus various cities across Europe and Asia.



▲ CBD locals Nivedita Ravindran and Daniel Ong have been appointed to the City of Melbourne’s inaugural Design Excellence Advisory Committee.

Those experiences, he believed, give him strong experience in what “works” for other global cities.

And for Melbourne, there were certainly areas for improvement.

“What I see is hyper-density in some parts of the city that not only creates an ugly skyline, but very detrimental environmental effects — wind, a lack of sunlight — that eat away at our amenity. I think that’s important to notice and rectify as much as we can.”

Mr Ong, who is a part of CBD-based community group Residents 3000, said the experience of being a parent was also crucial.

He saw a link between good design and establishing a broader demographic.

“It’s about equity and access for me as well and making sure we attract a really broad spread of people to live in the city. Because traditionally, there’s a very young population, with an average age of about 26. And then you’ve got this huge gulf when you start to have kids, and the traditional exodus to the ‘burbs begins. And then you might come back when you’re retired. So, we need that influx of both people internationally, but also that middle-age with kids.”

As for providing input to a committee featuring industry heavyweights, he was simply

“I represent the kind of citizen who’s working in another field but is nonetheless very engaged and invested in the debate that’s happening in the city, and eager to learn about that.”



looking forward to the opportunity.

“I could say daunted, but I’m humbled,” he said.

The committee’s first meeting will take place before the end of 2021 ●



David Schout

JOURNALIST

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▲ Artist Adrian Doyle in Blender Lane, one of Melbourne's street art scenes, which could be destroyed.



▲ An artist's impression of the Franklin St development proposal.

Mooted tower near QVM could destroy iconic art laneway

Continued from page 1.

protecting outstanding street art examples and enabling the continued evolution of what is by nature, an ephemeral art form," he said.

"The Victorian planning system does not recognise [or] award popularity with street artists as something that needs to be taken into account when making decisions about planning applications."

But Cr Reece said overall the design of the building by Bates Smart Architects was of "a really high standard" and was "terrific for pedestrian movement" to QVM.

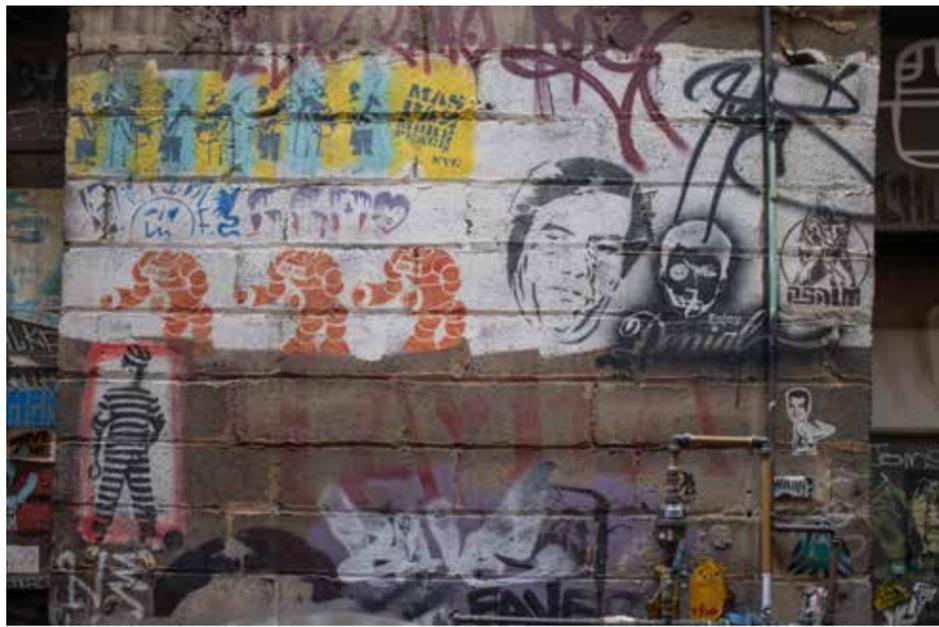
"This project does deliver some significant upside ... the widening of Blender Lane and the active frontage that provides a through block link from Franklin St through to Therry St ... literally right at the entrance of the Dairy Produce Hall at QVM," he said.

Cr Rohan Leppert agreed with the Deputy Lord Mayor, saying he also believed the application was of an "exceptionally high quality" but remained "optimistic about the future of street art in Melbourne and the wonderful canvases that we do have all throughout the city".

"At a personal level, of course, I'm devastated at the potential outcome here," he said. "I'm very familiar with the importance of Blender Lane, the artist studio, and the role that laneways like this play to emerging artists, to the street art culture generally, and to art in Melbourne full stop."

"It's simply the case though, that our planning controls cannot regulate ephemeral art and require the non-demolition of spaces that have not been graded as having heritage value."

Cr Leppert added, "we've known for a very, very long time this could happen to Blender Lane", but as soon as the wall was designated as a "special place with special character" that's when the street art community would decide to go elsewhere.



Melbourne Heritage Action president Tristan Davies said he supported the proposal but would like to have seen one brick wall at Blender Lane retained to ensure there was "much of its 1920s brick character" and an "iconic Melbourne feel to the laneway".

Adrian Doyle, artist and director of The Blender Studios, said he was devastated to learn of the planned demolition of art in Blender Lane which he described as the "cultural veins" of Melbourne.

He said the proposed development was typical of foreign investors "cashing in on the culture of our city ... and taking a little bit of Melbourne each time they do it".

"Melbourne's going to look like any other city. We're losing all the things that make Melbourne

have a unique and interesting identity," he said.

Friends of Queen Victoria Market secretary Dr Miriam Faine expressed concerns the council had gone against their heritage guidelines in the QVM precinct to "construct yet another potentially empty tower".

"Trashing our heritage is not the way to revive the city," she said. "The result is that the National Heritage listed QVM site now sits in a canyon surrounded by visually dominating towers. This will have detrimental consequences for the amenity of the QVM as a functioning market."

"Reinstating laneway access between Therry St and Franklin St is a good idea, but this needn't require the further obliteration of yet more significant commercial and industrial

“Melbourne’s going to look like any other city. We’re losing all the things that make Melbourne have a unique and interesting identity.”

heritage in the QVM precinct.”

“One would have thought that the pandemic offered a perfect opportunity to pause the relentless overdevelopment of Melbourne. Instead, reopening apparently means more of the same – and it doesn’t matter how awful or redundant a development is, this council will let it through.”

In addition to councillors approving the development proposal, councillors also voted in favour of a motion for the soon-to-be launched Design Excellence Advisory Committee to consider the role the City of Melbourne played in the “facilitation and protection” of street art, and “recognising Melbourne’s reputation as a world leading city for street art” ●

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New library coming to Queen Victoria Market

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*

COMMUNITY

A brand-new community library with a rooftop terrace is coming to the iconic Queen Victoria Market precinct, with hopes it could open as soon as 2023.

City of Melbourne councillors unanimously endorsed a proposal at their October 12 meeting for a three-storey library which will form part of a new \$70 million council-owned community hub.

The new library will feature a rooftop terrace for outdoor reading and activities, new community spaces, meeting rooms, a commercial kitchen and an auditorium.

Construction of the five-storey community hub was completed in September, and is a significant part of the \$450 million Munro development.

It will be home to family services, shared work spaces, and affordable housing units – with a fit-out for use anticipated to cost between \$12 million and \$14 million, according to a council report.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said a library in the city's north would improve access for residents and activate the growing precinct.

"We're expecting 24,000 new residents in the area by 2040, so we want to provide additional community facilities to meet the needs of a growing population," she said.

"The Munro community hub location will make it easier for local residents to access library services, while also driving visitation to the precinct and encouraging creativity and innovation."

Cr Capp said a recent review of the council's plans for the site found a childcare facility was not the "most suitable use of the space".

"When council first drew up its plans for Munro in 2014, there was high demand for childcare in the city's north to support local



▲ Lord Mayor Sally Capp celebrates the news of a new library to open at the Queen Victoria Market precinct.

residents and workers. New data suggests that gap has largely been filled by not-for-profit and private operators."

According to Creative Melbourne portfolio lead Cr Jamal Hakim, 1.5 million people a year visited City of Melbourne's libraries before the pandemic.

"Libraries are an important part of our social and economic infrastructure, providing valuable places for people to connect and access services," he said.

Queen Victoria Market CEO Stan Liacos said his organisation was "delighted" by the community library proposal.

"We think this is a terrific decision by council and is absolutely in the best interests of our great market and its surrounds," he said.

"We think the Munro development is a perfect location for another city library that's not only fabulous for the community but also in attracting people to our market, and a creating a community buzz."

"It creates a vibe and atmosphere which is ultimately what every good market wants so we are delighted."

CBD residents group EastEnders president Dr Stan Capp said the new facility was "a great initiative to increase services to the community and we welcome it; it's always good to bring community groups together".

Rafael Camillo, president of Residents 3000, also applauded the proposal, saying it was a "massive welcome" and "would bring communities together".

“

We think this is a terrific decision by council and is absolutely in the best interests of our great market and its surrounds.

”

"Anything that provides community more access to culture, knowledge, and putting communities together is always going to be important," he said.

"Libraries are for everyone of all ages – the more the merrier."

Friends of Queen Victoria Market spokeswoman Mary-Lou Howie said it was "in favour of any public service in the Munro development which is likely to generate visitation to the market".

"The City of Melbourne's change of heart to include a library is likely to attract more custom to the market than a childcare centre," she said.

The library's spaces, services and programs will be designed with input from First Nations peoples.

The Munro site was purchased by the City of Melbourne in 2014 and is a significant part of the ongoing Queen Victoria Market renewal project.

In addition to the 3100 sqm library, the development will feature retail outlets, a boutique hotel, build-to-rent residential apartments and a community hub.

The Munro library will join the City of Melbourne's existing network of six library branches ●



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REIGNITING MELBOURNE AS THE CITY REOPENS

Melbourne is open. Thanks to so many Melburnians getting vaccinated to help stop the spread of COVID-19, there is lots to look forward to in the city in the coming months.

A big, bold events line-up is set to welcome visitors back to Melbourne, reigniting design, sport, arts and entertainment right across the city.

The City of Melbourne has been working hard to ensure people can experience the city safely, while exploring and connecting with family and friends.

Melbourne is famous as an events capital, the home of superb theatres and galleries and the best place to discover the finest in live performances and art.

As Melbourne opens up, visitors have more reasons than ever to come into the city and see the streets and laneways in a new light, while enjoying art and events in a COVID-safe way.

Here are eight ways to make the most of Melbourne as we reignite the city with activations and events.

MELBOURNE MONEY

We're working with the Victorian Government to bring back a second course of the Melbourne Money dining scheme to help the city bounce back from the latest lockdown.

Melburnians claimed millions in cash back through Melbourne Money when it launched in June, with funds from the \$8.4 million scheme exhausted in less than five weeks.

More than 270,000 meals were rebated, amounting to \$40 million flowing to more than 3000 city restaurants, cafes and bars.

Watch this space for more information coming soon melbourne.vic.gov.au



MELBOURNE ATTRACTIONS KEYPASS

This summer, the City of Melbourne is teaming up with local tourism operators to offer discounts at some of the city's most exciting attractions and experiences, like the SEA LIFE Melbourne Aquarium and the Old Melbourne Gaol.

From fun family activities, to walking tours and foodie experiences, the Melbourne Attractions Keypass will unlock great deals for a terrific day or night out.

There's never been a better time to rediscover the city and visit the world-class attractions right here.

OUTDOOR TRADING, DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT

The city is being turned inside out to bring indoor trading, dining and entertainment outdoors and into the streets of Melbourne, leveraging the city's iconic laneways and eclectic, thriving nightlife.

Inside Out is designed to capitalise on the Victorian Government's roadmap out of lockdown, which will allow retail and hospitality businesses to trade outdoors.

Look out for all the fun of Inside Out on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights around town.



MELBOURNE FASHION WEEK

A springtime highlight, Melbourne Fashion Week from 15 to 21 November shines a light on local designers and retailers.

Half the program is free so look out for pop up runways across city locations as well as eight Fashion Capsule exhibits, which showcase the work of local designers, weavers, artisans, Aboriginal artists, stylists and more.

To view the full program or to purchase tickets, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/mfw



FLASH FORWARD LANEWAY ART

Feeling starved of art? Visit the city to see the best of Flash Forward, a program that casts laneways into a creative canvas.

Having commissioned 40 of the city's finest, most experimental and provocative artists to create brand new large-scale works, Flash Forward welcomes Melburnians back into the CBD to reinvigorate and re-energise our world-renowned laneways.

Extraordinary murals, shimmering colours, an ominous digital clock and a figure striking dozens of poses now enliven the walls of many Melbourne buildings.

All the artworks are new and free to visit.



NEW YEAR'S EVE LIGHTS UP

Plans are underway for a safe and creative City of Melbourne celebration to ring in 2022, Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"We know locals and visitors love our annual New Years' Eve celebration. The event showcases our city, our identity, and our sense of community," the Lord Mayor said.

"We are definitely planning to deliver a celebration - because more people in the city means keeping people in jobs and our restaurants, bars and cafes full.

"We're in active discussions with the Victorian Government and will ultimately be guided by the health advice to ensure the safety of everyone."

Revellers are encouraged to book in to city venues and celebrate responsibly at one of the many cafes, bars and restaurants that are throwing open their doors for a night of fun and festivity.

Or perhaps plan a staycation at one of the many new city hotels and make it the ultimate Melbourne holiday.

For more information about what to see, do, eat and explore in Melbourne, visit whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au and subscribe to the newsletter for weekly updates in your inbox.

MELBOURNE MUSIC WEEK

Melbourne's signature music event supports the live performance sector that helps make the city unique. As music venues reopen and live music returns, keep an eye out for a program celebrating local artists.

Melbourne Music Week from 3 to 12 December will take over Melbourne's venues, partner with iconic cultural organisations and spill out onto the streets and laneways to revel in the local music scene.



FESTIVE FAMILY FUN FOR CHRISTMAS

Melbourne can look forward to a COVID-safe Christmas experience in the city, to lift spirits after a difficult year.

The City of Melbourne's Christmas Festival is being expanded by an extra fortnight this year, for maximum enjoyment.

The six-week \$5.8 million festival features free and family-friendly entertainment, including lighting projections, festive installations and an outdoor Christmas cinema.

A 16-metre tall Christmas tree is a real showstopper, glowing with more than 30,000 energy-efficient LED lights and 500 baubles.

Come into the city to see the decorations, do your Christmas shopping and enjoy a meal at a favourite eatery.



Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur. All photos taken in line with health and safety guidelines.

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CITY OF MELBOURNE

A “big tick of approval”: Independent review backs city’s transport vision

An independent review of the City of Melbourne’s 10-year transport plan has “vindicated” the council’s pre-pandemic focus on public transport, pedestrians and cyclists to drive the city forward.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
TRANSPORT

Seen as a key test of the “Transport Strategy 2030” — one of the council’s most important policy documents in recent years — a Deloitte report reinforced that the city was moving in the right direction.

One councillor called it “massive vindication” for the policy.

In June, the council ordered an independent audit to ensure “ongoing efficacy” of its 10-year strategy after significant behavioural shifts during COVID-19.

The Transport Strategy 2030, released in 2019, has broadly prioritised pedestrians and cyclists while reducing the number of cars entering the CBD.

“We know that the way people travel into and around our city has changed in that [COVID] time,” Lord Mayor Sally Capp said in June.

“We’ve seen usual behaviours altered ... and I think it’s worthwhile for us to look at current and future trends, look at evidence and data, and consider the way forward.”

But, five months later, the Deloitte report largely backed the council’s vision.

It concluded that public transport was not only the “most efficient way to move number numbers of people” into the CBD, but that an ongoing reluctance to use it would be a “key obstacle to recovery”.

Crucially, it also backed plans, which are currently underway, to redistribute space in the CBD, granting more to both pedestrians (through footpath widening) and cyclists (via new dedicated lanes).

The report questioned the overall benefit of cars in the CBD.

It concluded that the high number (43 per cent) of motor vehicle ‘through trips’ — that is, cars that don’t stop in the city — were found to “use road space but make no contribution to central city economic or social activity”.

It flagged the introduction of a road pricing system that levied fees on drivers who don’t stop in the CBD, as a way to ease this congestion.

Cr Capp said it was now abundantly clear that this was the city’s biggest congestion issue.

“I note that the Deloitte review confirmed the conclusion of our transport strategy, that the largest factor contributing to congestion on our roadways is through-traffic; people travelling through the City of Melbourne without stopping to add any value at all,” she said.

“That is highly frustrating and something we need to continue to address.”

The council has already made moves to prevent through-traffic, including reducing speed limits on certain “little” streets from 40kmh to 20kmh while giving pedestrians right of way.

Another key takeaway from the independent report was a push for “demand-responsive parking”, where on-street parking would shift based on activity levels.



▲ An independent review found that people returning to public transport was crucial to Melbourne’s post-COVID recovery (picture: City of Melbourne).

Similar to ticketing for flights or events, where prices rise and fall based on demand, during the city’s busiest times parking would cost more than the council’s current \$7 an hour flat fee, while during quiet times that figure would drop.

According to the report, this would ensure less time is spent “hunting” for a spot, while also ensuring businesses don’t lose sales due to clogged bays.

Among a range of suggestions, the independent review recommended five pressing interventions within the next 12 months to assist post-pandemic city recovery:

- To encourage flexible work hours to manage peak demand;
- Implement real-time public transport tracking and capacity data to let users better manage their travel;
- Investigate demand-responsive parking pricing;
- Remove key physical touchpoints/barriers across the CBD; and
- Re-allocate road and parking space for local activation

Shift away from cars continues

The report was vindication for the council and its bid to lessen the number of cars coming into the CBD, a form of transport it sees as space inefficient.

For years now, it has refuted the idea that only people who drive cars increase the economic value to the city.

However, when the independent review was announced in June, deputy transport chair and city activation lead Cr Roshena Campbell

questioned whether the Deloitte report would find that the accelerated bicycle lane rollout was detrimental to the city.

“While I accept a lot of work has been done by this council on its transport strategy, in my view it may be the case that some of that work will be found to be inconsistent with what is necessary to support our city’s recovery and at that point, if it is the case, decisions will need to be made,” Cr Campbell said at the time.

Yet this did not eventuate.

In fact, the independent review called for “larger, more permanent” separated bike lanes.

A proposal to remove bike lanes as a way of increasing road and parking capacity was refuted in the report, scoring “low” in terms of how it would impact reactivation, and “moderate” in terms of its value for money.

While the report noted that car use had bounced back quickest after repeated Melbourne lockdowns, an expected rise in motor vehicle congestion as workers began returning to offices would then see numbers return to public transport or cycling.

The council received feedback from 868 people about new bicycle lanes constructed during the pandemic:

- 524 were supportive/very supportive
- 219 were unsupportive/very unsupportive
- 125 were neutral

The council said it had already made more than 60 adjustments to the bicycle lane rollout as a result of public feedback, something Cr Capp said was important.

“I hope our community take away from this experience that we are listening, that their feedback is important, and we do deliver,” she said.

“

This independent report by Deloitte has shown that this is the strategy to take us forward post-COVID, just as it was the strategy to take us forward pre-COVID.

”

Full steam ahead for 2030 strategy

The independent report would have spelled relief for the council’s transport planners, who had spent years developing the 2019 strategy that COVID then threatened.

Cr Rohan Leppert said the team should “take a bow”.

“This is massive vindication for the policy that was written,” he said.

“This independent report by Deloitte has shown that this is the strategy to take us forward post-COVID, just as it was the strategy to take us forward pre-COVID.”

Cr Leppert said the council’s transport mantra was to ease overcrowding, within the CBD in particular, in the most efficient way.

“It’s about reducing congestion on our footpaths, it’s reducing congestion where trams are stuck behind cars, it’s reducing congestion where cars are doing “blockies” trying to find a car park that doesn’t exist because of the way our parking settings work. So, removing congestion is at the core of what our transport strategy is about. For all modes — not just for one mode.”

Underlining the difficulty of the task ahead, Cr Leppert said it would give key decision-makers at Town Hall confidence that their work is backed by key data and evidence.

“Nothing that we do in this space is easy, it’s all challenging. The CBD is centre of a metropolis of 5.2 million people, and you can’t “magic up” more space. But I’m more confident than ever, based on the independent analysis that’s been presented to us that we can continue to make policy intervention with the confidence that we’re helping the greatest number of people move as efficiently as possible.”

The Lord Mayor underlined the overall importance of transport as the city emerges post-lockdown.

“[It] must be a key facilitator of our city recovery and effectiveness,” she said. “It can’t be a barrier.” ●



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Readings set to open new chapter in CBD

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

A new Readings bookshop is set to open in Melbourne's CBD, with managing director Mark Rubbo rejoicing that the city would no longer have lockdowns "hanging over our heads". While the independent Australian bookshop retailer saw revenue plunge by as much as 60 per cent at its State Library store during the pandemic, Mr Rubbo said he was hopeful of the city bouncing back after it was set free from the world's longest lockdown.

"It's a bit of a gamble but I think the city will come back. This opportunity came up, so we've been negotiating since March," he said.

Mr Rubbo said the new store was currently being built and would be ready to open its doors by December at the Emporium shopping centre on Lonsdale St.

"It's really exciting, we're working on the range at the moment. We've got a lovely big children's section, art and design, and great fiction and non-fiction sections."

Mr Rubbo said online sales were "not enough" for trading to remain viable during lockdown, but he was "looking forward to opening up" and book lovers being able to inhale the crisp aroma of new books while browsing in-store.

"It's going to be great not having threats of lockdowns hanging over our heads," he said, adding he was backing the city's revival and passionate readers returning to the CBD and celebrating the city's literary culture.

The new bookshop at Emporium will be Readings' eighth Melbourne store, with its State Library and Doncaster stores having remained

closed during the sixth lockdown while the other shops transitioned online.

The Emporium bookshop has been designed by Kerstin Thompson Architects whose projects include an Aesop store also at Emporium, Broadmeadows Town Hall, primary schools, a police station, and a CBD restaurant.

"It's been wonderful to work with them, they use different qualities and high-quality, innovative things. We can't wait to see what it looks like," Mr Rubbo said.

"Part of the brief to Kerstin Thompson was to create a space that people would really love being in and make it a real community hub for the CBD."

"The front will be quite striking, people may possibly think we're crazy," he said referring to the shop window which has been proposed to display the back covers of books with a certain "mystery about it".

"I hope it will be a good contribution to Melbourne because Melbourne is an UNESCO city of literature."

City of Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor Nick Reece said the news of a new Readings bookshop was "so exciting".

"Readings is not just an iconic bookshop, it is a 'happy place' for so many Melburnians, and this new store will give people even more reason to visit the Emporium," he said.

"The timing is perfect with Melbourne retail re-opening, Christmas coming, and all of us looking for a good book to read over summer."

"Readings will be a magnet for shoppers, so it will benefit all the retailers in the Emporium, which is great." ●

Electric buses to improve CBD air quality

WORDS BY *David Schout*
TRANSPORT

Some of the harmful diesel buses that run along Lonsdale St could be replaced with electric alternatives as early as June 2022, in a move that will lessen air pollution in the CBD.

During the next nine years, 341 electric and hybrid buses will be introduced into the metropolitan network, including a commitment for five in the first half of 2022.

The pledge was part of a \$2.3 billion contract announced in October between the state government and Melbourne-based company Kinetic to operate a third of the metropolitan bus network, taking over current operator Transdev.

While the state government could not yet confirm specific zero or low-emission routes, some of the 16 routes that travel along Lonsdale St — Melbourne's busiest bus corridor which — are likely to feature in the initial stages of the rollout.

Kinetic has committed to introducing 36 fully electric buses to the network by mid-2025.

The move is a welcome one for CBD locals after a report earlier this year suggested diesel fumes from buses on Lonsdale St, which saw more than 1000 bus movements a day, was a significant factor in the city's air quality.

In a submission to the state government inquiry into the health impacts of air pollution, the City of Melbourne said the busy bus street should be made a priority.

"Converting the Lonsdale St bus corridor to zero emissions would be a significant step towards reducing the harm caused by air pollution in the city," it read.

"The buses run on diesel fuel, the emissions of which are implicated in human cancer, heart and lung damage, and undermining mental functioning."

As part of the new contract, almost two-thirds of the

537-bus fleet will be replaced with low or zero emission vehicles before mid-2031.

The electric buses will be deployed from the Sunshine and Heatherton depots.

The state government had already pledged for all new public transport buses to be zero emissions from 2025.

Speaking of the deal in parliament, Minister for Public Transport Ben Carroll said it was addressing an important issue.

"We know tackling transport emissions is imminent and vitally important. It is the second-largest source of emissions in our economy and the fastest growing," he said.

"We know buses coming out of COVID have been one of the most resilient forms of public transport. We also know that buses return \$5 to the community for every \$1 invested (and that) one bus has the equivalent of taking 50 cars off the street."

The Public Transport Users Association gave it the tick of approval.

"The shift towards electric buses is very welcome and will help public transport continue to be one of the cleanest ways to get around our city," the PTUA said on Twitter.

At peak times, more than 1400 people walk on Lonsdale St between Swanston and Russell streets every hour.

In its submission to the air pollution inquiry, the City of Melbourne said the need to replace diesel buses had become more pertinent during the past 18 months, particularly as some hospitality venues made outdoor dining arrangements permanent.

"One of the reasons the City of Melbourne supports zero emission buses is the need to improve the quality of the outdoor environment in the city, including reducing air pollution, to support all sorts of activity including outdoor dining as well as to reduce the harmful effects of pollution on health," it said ●

Melbourne leading the way in reducing emissions

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
ENVIRONMENT

The City of Melbourne has released the next iteration of its Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP) signalling an ongoing commitment to achieving zero emissions by 2040.

It comes off the back of the council's successful 2016-2020 ERP which achieved emissions reductions of 76 per cent since 2011 through actions such as solar installations, street light upgrades and 100 per cent renewable energy procurement.

Speaking at the October 19 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting, Cr Rohan Leppert said people would struggle to find a council policy or plan that was more effective than the EMP.

"It's an example of a plan that I just couldn't be prouder of and the work of our team," he said.

"Our carbon offset plans are contributing to reforesting Australia, and the globe in fact, and the accounting and transparency that goes into these processes is really leading

in government and leading across Australia too."

"In line with the science and the carbon emissions targets, we need to stay ahead to be a good leader and in line with what we know works and is cost efficient to do, and this next iteration of our emissions reduction plan is very exciting, and we know it'll continue to reduce the carbon emissions aggressively, but sensibly and efficiently."

The 2021-2026 EMP details 72 actions under eight priorities including zero carbon for council buildings, carbon neutral events, zero carbon corporate transport, zero waste for council operations and low emissions council subsidiaries.

Costing a total of \$3.63 million, the 2021-26 ERP will electrify council buildings saving 6500 tonnes of carbon emissions to 2040.

It will also neutralise 5800 tonnes of carbon emissions each year through running carbon neutral events — where the same amount of carbon produced is removed through absorbing it back from the atmosphere.

Cr Leppert said achieving carbon neutral events was still the greatest challenge facing the council.

"But there's also quite a lot of work there to do on zero carbon corporate transport and working with subsidiaries to reduce their emissions."

"And continuing to work through our entire supply chain, not only are we leading the way, but showing the corporate world, residents and everyone how this can be done efficiently, cheaply, for the benefit of society as a whole."

According to the ERP, the council's focus has shifted towards its fuel and gas consumption which accounts for 12 per cent of council emissions, as well as the supply chain which contributes 38 per cent.

The switch in focus comes after the energy used by council buildings significantly decreased since the council began powering them with 100 per cent renewable energy. The rest of the emissions are accounted for by a mix of waste services and the council's subsidiaries; the Queen Victoria Market and Citywide, together making up a third of its emissions ●

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▲ Courtney Lettieri of Harcourts.



▲ A new tower goes up in Bourke St.

A week in the life of Bourke St

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
PROPERTY

The last days of lockdown were moving swiftly for those connected to the block in Bourke St between Little Collins, Elizabeth and McKillop streets.

A new office tower was completed, residents were moving back into their heritage apartments and a famous tea house was re-opening.

The tower, at 405 Bourke, was completed on Friday, October 15 and construction workers celebrated after a difficult build.

Within a day, residents were moving back in next door to find a 39-storey tower cantilevered over their apartment building.

The tower was designed by architects Woods Bagot, who created a similar cantilever for a tower at 80 Collins St, completed last year.

Commentators say that a cantilever is expensive to build but it allows a developer to buy air space in a prominent site while protecting heritage buildings close to the ground.

The tower fits well into the streetscape on Bourke St with the podium the same height as the five-storey historic buildings either side. The residential building to the west was itself a 2010 redevelopment of the old McEwans hardware store, which went bankrupt in 1993.

If anything has come out of the pandemic, it has been the show of strength of the construction industry, particularly on hard core development projects such as this.

The tower was pre-leased in entirety to the National Australia Bank prior to COVID and bank staff were moving into 395, beneath the residential section, and 405, with the branch due to open in November.

Courtney Lettieri, who works for Harcourts Melbourne City, travelled from her home in Werribee to Bourke St on the Thursday after completion to arrange an inspection of one of the apartments.



If anything has come out of the pandemic, it has been the show of strength of the construction industry, particularly on hard core development projects such as this.



“You can’t beat this location,” she said. “It’s a beautiful part of town, central where you get the best of both worlds.”

Harcourts already has its marketing down pat for what they’re calling a “pied-à-terre”, in city real estate parlance “a home away from home”.

Harcourts has several apartments for lease at 395 and Courtney was showing people through a two-bedroom apartment with views of the GPO, for sale for \$690,000 to \$740,000.

“We’re not allowed to advertise,” she said. “But we can do inspections.”

Maker Lane, a new lane running through to Little Collins St, was lagging a week behind the rest, but just up the street, on the corner of McKillop St, Hopetoun Tea Rooms was getting ready to open.

The tea room has replaced another Melbourne institution, Kozminsky’s jewellery store. That move is a story in itself after the original tea room went into administration last year following a dispute with the owners of the Block Arcade.

The construction company, Multiplex, which built the tower for Brookfield Properties, has already moved out to work on its next job, the new quarantine centre at Mickleham ●

Developer takes council to VCAT over permit condition to build hotel

WORDS BY Brendan Rees
PLANNING

A developer will head to the state planning tribunal to contest a permit condition despite winning the City of Melbourne’s approval to build a 12-storey hotel in the CBD.

Datre Pty Ltd was recently given the green light to demolish Melbourne’s Hub Arcade and build a 40-metre hotel in its place under a \$35 million plan.

But the Toorak-based developer has now lodged an appeal at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) against the council after it issued a single permit condition for a rear upper-level setback requirement.

According to the council, the setback is required “to protect amenity and allow equitable development of the adjoining site”.

Under the plans, the proposed boutique hotel building at Little Collins St will feature 135 guest rooms, shops, a pool, restaurants and eateries.

The two-storey Hub Arcade, which opened in 1965, will be bulldozed to make way for the new building with a proposal to upgrade the existing link to the heritage-listed Royal Arcade, which is home to a number of restaurants and specialty shops.

The plans also include an “elegant arched brick ground floor retail streetscape” as well as an 11th-floor terrace with a glazed balustrade, a lobby, gym and swimming pool in the basement, and food and drink venues on the ground floor and roof top.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the proposal was an “exciting project which will revitalise a tired section of Little Collins St to create a beautiful new boutique hotel”.

“The Hub Arcade is an iconic site, and it was important plans for its redevelopment were respectful and displayed quality architecture and design,” he said.

“We hope the new hotel will help bring back the buzz to this historic quarter of the city and help support other local businesses in the area.”

Under the proposal, the new building will incorporate a central arcade entry at the centre of its Little Collins St frontage, with shops on either side.

“While the proposal is somewhat taller than the majority of these buildings, the upper levels of the proposed hotel will not exert any adverse scale impacts,” the submission said.

The application said demolition was “acceptable” as the arcade building was not considered contributory.

“The proposed new building will be a positive insertion within its heritage context, that responds to the valued character of the precinct though its massing, articulation and materiality,” it said.

The new hotel would also “provide an appropriate setting to and internal interface with the



▲ An artist’s impression of a proposed 12-storey hotel to be built in Little Collins St.



adjacent Royal Arcade”.

The proposal does not include car parking on site, however, there would be a total of 28 bicycle spaces. Tristan Davies, president of the Melbourne Heritage Action group, which had objected to the proposal, said “it is disappointing to see one of Melbourne’s little arcades go, and also the low-rent shops in it disappear ... which is something we really need when Melbourne reopens.”

In its objection letter, the group said it was against the demolition of the Hub Arcade and expressed concerns the proposed building would “certainly dominate its neighbours”.

“While we understand the planning scheme does not put controls on us, it is unfortunate to see yet another cultural space make way for a ‘luxury hotel,’” the letter said.

“We also object to the demolition of an arcade with multiple tenancies being turned into a blander arcade with reduced tenancy spaces.”

A VCAT hearing has been scheduled for March 2022.

Datre Pty Ltd has been contacted for comment ●

McKillop St to become the latest smoke-free zone

WORDS BY Kaylah-Joelle Baker
HEALTH

McKillop St is the latest area in the CBD where clean air will be given priority after the City of Melbourne approved a smoking ban.

Situated between Bourke and Little Collins streets, a plan for the narrow laneway to become a smoke-free zone was discussed by councillors at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on October 19.

The motion to ban smoking in McKillop St received unanimous support from councillors, and Lord Mayor Sally Capp expressed confidence in the decision, and the support it had received from the community.

“We put the proposal to the local community and 90 per cent told us they supported McKillop St going smoke-free,” she said.

The latest ban is part of the City of Melbourne’s smoke-free policy, which was endorsed by councillors in July this year and marked the first framework of its kind to come out of an Australian capital city council.



The policy aims to reduce smoking in the city through reinforcing smoke-free areas, while educating and helping people in the community to quit.

McKillop St has become the 13th smoke-free zone alongside others including Bourke Street Mall, QV Melbourne, The Tan and Princes Park running tracks and Howey Place.

Hopeful that the awareness of smoke-free zones would aid in supporting “people who are trying to quit”, the council’s health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio lead Cr Dr Olivia Ball welcomed the initiative ●

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▲ Market Lane Coffee welcomes back diners at its Collins St café.



▲ Twin Barbers shop co-owners Zed Freihat and Omarion Freihat.



▲ Mats Ekstrom, owner of Swensk clothing store, serves customers outdoors.

Businesses rejoice as world's longest lockdown ends

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

Traders in Melbourne's CBD are pinning their hopes on a robust rebound after finally waving goodbye to the world's longest lockdown.

After months of being confined to their homes, visitors flocked to the city on October 22 to celebrate their newly returned freedoms, giving a much-needed cash boost to businesses.

Restaurant and bar owner of Big Esso at Federation Square, Normie Bero, who joined Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp in the celebrations, said reopening was a "huge relief".

"Big Esso means biggest thanks in my language, and I'm so thankful to see our village back together, enjoying themselves, and sharing food and a drink with family and friends – it's brought the city back to life," she said.

In Elizabeth St, a long queue formed outside the Twin Barbers shop as men rushed to have their growing locks trimmed.

"It was super busy," owner Zed Freihat said, who, along with his co-owner and twin brother

Omarion, didn't stop for a break.

"We had to come back strong, it's good. It was so up and down that at least we can plan for the future of the business."

Mats Ekstrom, owner of Swensk clothing store on Little Collins St, said he set up a clothing rack, a couch, and a pop-up change room outside his shop after restrictions limited retail to trading outdoors.

"It's not the most convenient way of doing it for a retailer [but] it's better to do stuff than complain," he said.

"We've been waiting for this for such a long time ... to be able to trade and meet people and talk to them."

Market Lane Coffee owner Jason Scheltus said it had been "a long road" but rejoiced in welcoming back diners to his Collins St café.

"We think it's a much nicer experience to sit in and have a coffee rather than takeaway," he said.

Queen Victoria Market CEO Stan Liacos said "there was a spring in everybody's step" during the market's partial reopening.

"The trajectory of visitation is positive, it's



▲ L-R: Sally Capp, Normie Bero and Caroline Ralphsmith.

upward, it's encouraging. And importantly, there's a very good vibe among the traders who are anticipating a good recovery and a prosperous festive season trading," he said.

Chinatown Precinct president Danny Doon said they had a strong response in people visiting Chinatown with a 600 per cent increase in

foot traffic, according to the City of Melbourne's pedestrian counter.

He also thanked the City of Melbourne for having "kindly arranged" covers for parklets so diners could enjoy themselves after the 20-guest indoor limit presented a problem if bad weather had affected outdoor dining.

Charlyne Manshanden, executive officer of the Collins Street Precinct, said traders were "extremely excited" to see the end of the sixth lockdown.

"Businesses have been working extremely hard to ensure that they are able to welcome people back in the safest way possible, while still maintaining the buzz and vibrancy we've missed so much," she said.

"We look forward to seeing workers and visitors returning, and life being injected back into the CBD."

The Lord Mayor said she was proud of what Melbournians had "achieved together as a city".

"Despite enduring the world's longest lockdown, our city still boasts the best hospitality, retail and events scene in the whole of Australia," she said ●

Push to bring back office workers as city emerges from lockdown

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp has vowed the council will "run full pelt" at reinvigorating the city's CBD as it emerges from lockdown, with its priority focusing on the return of office workers.

It comes as recent survey data from the Property Council shows Melbourne's CBD's office occupancy plunged to six per cent for the month of September – its lowest level yet since the survey began in July 2020.

The figure is down from the previous low of seven per cent which was recorded in August.

Occupancy rates in the CBD rose

to 45 per cent in May before another COVID-19 outbreak all but obliterated the city's chances of recovery.

Speaking at a Property Council seminar in October titled "Revitalising Melbourne's CBD", Cr Capp said city workers were critical to the city's economy and the council would continue to advocate across the public and private sectors for their return.

"All levels of government and private sector have a role to play in encouraging workers back to the office," she said.

"The reasons for coming into the office are really more prevalent than ever – creativity, innovation, connections and the confidence that city workers and major employers bring

to our city can't be understated."

"We don't just want to be 'allowed' to come back, we want government and major employees to encourage and lead city workplaces back just as they've been told to stay at home," she said, adding Town Hall's 1600-strong staff would be returning "as soon as restrictions allow".

"We do acknowledge that the rhythm of our city has changed and the way that we work has changed."

"Ultimately we want to bring back the buzz to Melbourne ... we do want to run full pelt at it with you all so that we can settle into new rhythms as quickly as possible."

Cr Capp said the City of Melbourne would also be advocating for the removal of masks for office workers

once the state hits the 80 per cent double dose vaccination target, projected to be November 5. However, people will still be encouraged to "work from home if you can".

City of Melbourne CEO Justin Hanney also addressed the seminar, saying the council would be "activating the hell out of the city" in a bid to attract office workers and visitors.

"We know if we bring back people three days per week versus four days per week versus five days per week, every single day is a full AFL grand final equivalent in the city in terms of crowd numbers which relates to foot traffic," he said.

"If it's a great experience being back in the city they're going to be back more consistently. We are really

committed to making sure that experience is a first-class experience."

To help achieve this, Mr Hanney said the council would ensure the city's public transport options were "working really effectively" and would consider introducing staggered work times to encourage "a bit of flow of people in the city".

"[We're] making sure that the city is really clean and presentable leading up to the Australian Open, making sure when workers come back into the city they remember what's great about Melbourne."

Danni Hunter, Victorian executive director of the Property Council, said "we need people back in the city as they are the lifeblood of Melbourne and support our businesses" ●

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Community consulted on future of Carlton Gardens

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

A range of new protections and facilities for Carlton Gardens have been proposed by the City of Melbourne in a major heritage review.

The Carlton Gardens Master Plan sets out a number of proposals to improve access, safety and amenity for the UNESCO-listed space in the years to come.

Cr Rohan Leppert said the City of Melbourne was seeking community feedback on the plans to improve the gardens.

"The City of Melbourne has the rare honour of managing a World Heritage site, and we take our responsibility to protect the cultural, historic and environmental values of the Carlton Gardens seriously," Cr Leppert said.

"The gardens are a living, vital public meeting place, treasured by so many and we are keen to hear what the community thinks about the draft plan."

Under the new plans the gardens will receive new toilet facilities and lighting, and pathways will be upgraded.

New garden beds will also be installed to provide more natural shade with a range of exotic tree species that are consistent with the 19th century layout of the gardens.

Carlton Gardens Tennis Club vice president Stuart Speirs said that he was "chuffed" that the council was improving the lighting as it was an important safety measure.

"We have been quite focused on the lighting of the pathway that goes around Carlton and Nicholson streets as we're conscious of the safety element," Mr Speirs said.

"After Eurydice Dixon was killed in Princes Park, we made it clear to the council that we were keen to do whatever we could to help light up the gardens, whether it be keeping the clubhouse lights on or lighting up the courts."

"We were quite forward in talking about the club being lit up and being a place at night for women to gravitate towards if that scenario is presented to them."

The plans also seek to update guidelines for large events held at the gardens – including the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS) and White Night.

Although 72 per cent of respondents to Engage Victoria's 2020 survey about Carlton Gardens said the events were appropriate, some heritage advocates disagree.

Carlton resident and Friends of the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens



▲ Carlton Gardens. Photo: Murray Enders.

member Margaret O'Brien said the heritage protections were set at a "low standard".

"There would be no disagreement that Melbourne Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens, while appreciated locally, has the lowest profile of any of Australia's World Heritage-listed sites," Ms O'Brien said.

"Along with a low profile, it has arguably, the weakest governance and planning controls of all Australia's World Heritage sites."

Ms O'Brien said that the review would "lift the lid on problems" for the first time since the World Heritage listing in 2004 – particularly in relation to the damage caused by MIFGS.

"It is the position of the group that the controls have been set to a low standard compared to what the world might expect of us," Ms O'Brien said.

"We believe, and there is a track record, that MIFGS has had a long list of consequences and impacts for the gardens which we would like to take the opportunity to have reviewed."

Deputy president of Protectors of Public Lands Victoria Fiona Bell was also vehemently against MIFGS being held in Carlton Gardens.

Ms Bell said that the use of heavy machinery and installation of numerous tents and temporary buildings on the grass has caused considerable damage to the gardens and tree roots.

"We believe numerous established trees have been lost from the southern Carlton Gardens in recent years compared to a much smaller loss in the northern gardens with their beautiful largely intact massive trees in avenues," Ms Bell said.

"In order to have greater protections we're



▲ Damage following the 2015 flower and garden show.

suggesting that any events, including the flower show, not to be held on the soft surfaces of the Carlton Gardens."

"The trees and ground are too delicate for that and that fencing it off from the general population is not desirable, considering that it occurs for weeks on end."

Ms Bell had an independent arborist report commissioned to assess the damage from the show which hosts up to 100,000 visitors, which found the damage was "considerable".

"Earlier this year, three old elms, all 120 years old, in the southern Carlton Gardens, were lost due to rotting of their trunks," Ms Bell said.

"An interesting fact is that for years during the MIFGS public toilets were placed under the canopies of these trees."

"I am reliably informed that in France the public are never permitted to trample over the World Heritage gardens of Versailles or other Royal Palaces."

The draft masterplan was hotly debated among members of the EastEnders Association during a Zoom meeting in October, with one resident expressing concern the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show had caused "considerable damage" in previous years to the Carlton Gardens and surrounding areas.

"We really do have to make sure we honour this heritage site, and treat it that way," resident Jim Dixon said.

"I'm most disappointed that the council is treating it or overriding that with a commercial consideration for the International Flower Show."

According to Mr Dixon, locals were also "disgusted" that the City of Melbourne had not provided "full and open disclosure" of the "recovery of the full costs of the damage done to any major event".

"Council hasn't [for] over more than a decade got the point that it must control the situation when someone's using it. When you look at the financial statements over the years there hasn't been adequate disclosure of the use of that heritage site," he said.

Cr Elizabeth Doidge said that while MIFGS provided an obstacle for those trying to walk through the gardens, it was an important event for Melbourne.

"For 15 years I've walked through that park on my way to university or work so the impact of the Flower and Garden Show is something I'm very familiar with," Cr Doidge said.

"But that being said the show is one of the many important events that have brought people to the park and to our city."

Other changes outlined in the report include replacing two avenues of white poplar trees with a hardier species that is more resistant to climate change.

The plan doesn't specify what trees should replace the poplars but suggests planting a species with similar characteristics that are better equipped for hot and dry conditions.

Cr Leppert said a huge amount of work had been done to ensure the heritage character of the gardens was maintained while preparing for climate change.

"As some tree species in these gardens will die in warmer weather, we want to make sure all those heritage characteristics are kept with climate-ready species going forward," Cr Leppert said.

By mid to late November, a pop-up session in the gardens will be held, including a specific session with children also planned.

People will be able to access the plan and complete a questionnaire by November 21 using the Participate Melbourne website or a QR code at the gardens.

Cr Olivia Ball described herself as a "passionate Carlton local" and urged the community to get involved in the future of the important space.

"We know from evidence, that it's good for us and essential to get out into nature," Cr Ball said.

"I have walked through the gardens daily and kept thinking how lucky and blessed we are to have this amazing space." ●

Popular arts space moves to the Queen Victoria Market precinct

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
ARTS & CULTURE

A popular outdoor arts space in Southbank is set to be relocated to the Queen Victoria Market (QVM) precinct as part of a plan to recover and revitalise the precinct.

Testing Grounds, an experimental arts space which has called Southbank home for the past eight years, will move to the pop-up park at the iconic QVM by the end of the year.

The arts space, which is currently next to the Arts Centre and the Australian Ballet Centre, has allowed hundreds of artists like students, directors, poets, and producers the opportunity to share ideas and test their work.

At its new home, Testing Grounds will run a creative hub with local artists, and work with the City of Melbourne and the QVM on installations and events to drive creative opportunities and visitation.

The Market Square pop-up park is part of the first stage of works to transform the market's asphalt car park into 1.75 hectares of public space.

Testing Grounds practice program director Arie Glorie welcomed the



▲ Visual artist and fashion designer Chelsea Hickman held a major event at Testing Grounds titled Situations Vacant in 2019.

news of the creative space's relocation to the QVM precinct, saying it would see their audience grow.

"It's amazing. I think it's really good because the place we had in Southbank was a really great site but quite hidden," he told *CBD News*.

"We know our audience is just increasing massively... the QVM just offers massive exposure to their ideas and their ways of working."

"When I came on board in 2016 as curator, I thought we would be there for 24 months and then pack up, but we keep having a really good time and working with so many people

that it just keeps getting extended."

Mr Glorie said the facility's infrastructure would be recycled and moved to the QVM pop-up park, however a new design would be created.

"Southbank had a fence around it so we had to lock the gates at night whereas the site at Queen Victoria is not just for artists to make work for the public to enjoy every day, it's more of a pavilion," he said.

"It truly becomes an even more public art and public space than ever before. People can get to sit there, hang out, they can watch people do



talks, performances, and exhibitions."

Visual artist and fashion designer Chelsea Hickman said her experiences at Testing Grounds had been "nothing but positive and inspirational".

While she conceded she was "saddened" to learn of its closure in Southbank, which was in a "special location" near the National Gallery of Victoria and the Arts Centre, she was "curious and excited" to see how the new Testing Grounds space responded to the location at QVM.

She said the safe space for artists to test ideas in varying capacities was "very beneficial" to her as an

emerging artist.

As an initiative of Creative Victoria, Testing Grounds was originally set-up as a temporary activation in 2013, but has now turned a "long-vacant, overgrown parcel of land" in Southbank into a vibrant creative space.

Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the new site would "entice people back to the city and play an important role in Melbourne's economic recovery".

However, Friends of Queen Victoria Market president Mary-Lou Howie said while its members supported the arts, the "intrusive industrial Testing Grounds infrastructure is totally inappropriate in the context of a traditional working market".

"The car park, which is a part of the National Heritage listed market, is promoted widely by the City of Melbourne as 'public open space' at the expense of, and with adverse impact, on QVM customers and traders," she said. "It is regrettable that once again the City of Melbourne has acted without public consultation in relation to a key public asset."

The expanded experimental arts space will be funded for the next two years through the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund ●

Council unveils plan to revive empty shop fronts in the CBD to keep “city alive and active”

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Empty shop fronts in the CBD could become a thing of the past under an ambitious plan that seeks to occupy as many spaces as possible to revitalise the city.

Speaking at a Property Council seminar in October, City of Melbourne CEO Justin Hanney said it was the council’s aim to fill as many empty shops “as we possibly can”, even if it was on a short-term basis “so that we really, really are thinking about how we keep the city alive and active”.

Mr Hanney said the vacancy rate for shops in the CBD was five per cent before the pandemic but was now more likely to be 20 per cent.

“One in five, it’s significant,” he said. “There’s a couple of strips, there’s one in Elizabeth St, where in a group of 10 shops ... six of those are vacant and it has a decaying look and feel.”

“We’re saying hand them over on a month-to-month [basis] to activate them, they’re taken back by the landlords/owners at any point in time so they’re not on long-term leases but we’re having them occupied.”

Mr Hanney’s pledge to occupy vacant shop fronts as it emerges from devastating lockdowns comes as a report to councillors in October said, “some parts of the city risk long-term decay.”

“To ensure a strong post-crisis recovery, it is critically-important that visitors are presented



▲ Jackie Middleton, co-owner of Earl Canteen sandwich chain, is excited to open a new venue, Dame, on Collins St.

with a vibrant and exciting retail, hospitality and entertainment experience,” the report said.

Melbourne Lord mayor Sally Capp said the council was working with local artists, entrepreneurs, precinct associations, the real estate industry and landlords to transform vacant shop fronts in the city.

“We are using art, performance, new retail pop-ups, entrepreneurial activities, even community radio stations, to create lively

installations in empty shop fronts, with a focus on Docklands, Lygon St and the CBD,” she said.

“These will help draw people to our city, but will also ensure that the experience and vibe through our streets is something that people would expect.”

Mr Hanney said Melbourne could draw inspiration from Dubai in 2009 following the global financial crisis.

“They finished off every outside building,

it didn’t matter what happened inside, but it didn’t present as a decaying city,” he said.

“I think there’s something there in a similarity between shop fronts and making sure we keep them occupied in the short-term because the retail and the city will come back, but we need to make sure we’re giving it as much opportunity [as possible] to enable that to happen.”

The Property Council is also supportive of activating shop fronts with its Victorian executive director Danni Hunter conceding “we have a really immense task on our hands to revive our great city”.

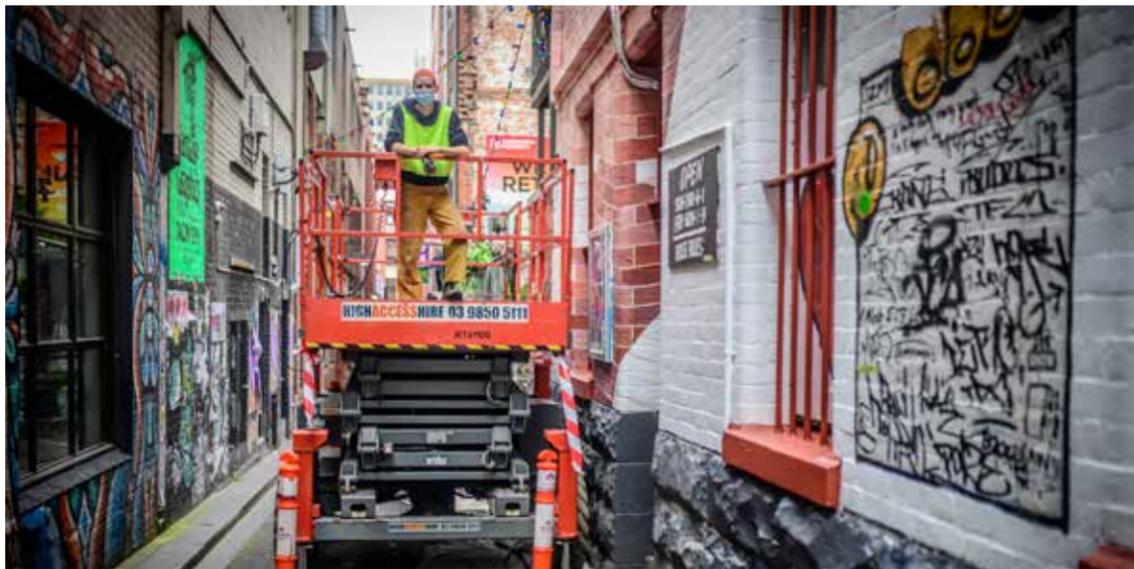
Among those excited to open a new venue in the CBD is Jackie Middleton, co-owner of Earl Canteen sandwich chain.

Ms Middleton said she was confident the city would spring back to life, and had signed a lease to open a new venue, Dame, on Collins St, which will launch in January and offer coffee, food, and cocktails.

“At first we were hesitant because it was obviously during COVID but then you push past that and realise there will definitely be a rebirth of the city, and people looking forward to re-connecting again,” she said.

Charlyne Manshanden, executive officer of the Collins Street Precinct Group, said “We welcome any initiative that encourages people to return to the city and help businesses get back on their feet.”

“It’s been a tough 18 months for city businesses, so we do look forward to seeing the CBD being brought back to life,” she said ●



CBD laneways come to life with local art

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
ARTS & CULTURE

Forty laneways throughout the CBD have been transformed into public art attractions in a program designed to keep artists employed during the pandemic.

The *Flash Forward* program is a collaboration between the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government and has employed 150 artists who would otherwise have been without work during the pandemic.

So far 20 laneways have finished artworks on display, with five murals recently completed at Langs Lane, Rose Lane, Platypus Alley, Rainbow Alley, and Drewery Alley.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said that the program was intended to turn the city into an “outdoor art gallery” in celebration of restrictions easing.

“These new Flash Forward artworks present diverse perspectives while transforming our city with extraordinary walls of colour,” the Lord Mayor said.

“If the CBD is in your 15km radius, we’d love to welcome you back to get your culture fix, off-screen.”

The program has been critical to keeping creative professionals such as George Goodnow in paid work, who has almost finished their mural on Tattersalls Lane.

Mr Goodnow said that the project was a “saving grace” in a year where lockdowns had prevented art exhibitions and events from going ahead.

“For most artists there hasn’t been a lot of work and it’s been a year of starting and stopping so it’s great to have something that provides structure and a reason to get out of the house,” Mr Goodnow said.

“I feel lucky to have any kind of work at the moment and to have a job like this is a dream.”

The brick wall in Tattersall Lane is 150 years old and houses the iconic Ferdurke bar.

Mr Goodnow’s mural warps the architecture of the building – bending, curving and folding the brickwork and windows – to look like fabric.

“It creates the illusion that the wall is soft and flowing and acts more like fabric more than a rigid, brick structure,” Mr Goodnow said.

“I wanted to change the way that we view familiar public spaces and think about how we can make new space softer and less rigid.”

“On a practical level, it’s painting brick on bricks – so that’s kind of funny – but it creates a really interesting architectural effect.”

Artist Shawn Lu, who has recently completed his fairytale inspired artwork in Langs Lane, said the program had been a “life-saver”.

“My normal sales and income that came from murals or commissioned artwork had completely disappeared overnight, so this initiative has been a lifesaver, and I’m not the only artist to say that,” Mr Lu said.

“This has been a big help with my mental health, it boosted my confidence and helped me get back on my feet.”

Minister for Employment Jaala Pulford said the program was a practical way for the government to support artists directly impacted by the lockdown.

“Victoria has so many incredible artists and we’re thrilled to have created jobs for 150 of them that has also added magnificent colour and life for our city laneways,” Ms Pulford said.

“This program is a great example of how innovative partnerships can help people looking for work, employers looking for staff, and have a positive impact on the wider community.” ●

Collin St’s most famous residents continue to entertain through lockdown

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
ENVIRONMENT

Situated on a perch high above the CBD, two nesting Peregrine Falcons have captivated the eyes of many throughout Victoria’s sixth lockdown.

Viewed through a permanently set-up webcam onto a dedicated “Peregrine Falcons at 367” website, the footage is streamed live 24 hours a day.

And the bird-crazed fans of the footage have been a part of witnessing the arrival of four white fluffy chicks, which began to hatch during the morning of September 30, captivating many Melburnians.

Dr Victor Hurley, volunteer with BirdLife Australia and founder and leader of the Victorian Peregrine Program, believes the Peregrine Falcons’ arrival came at the perfect time.

“Due to the last two years of lockdown, people and news media are now really looking for positive stories and something non-demanding to engage with,” he said.

“People have commented on how delighted and pleased they are to have something like this.”

Due to the popularity of the live stream, a dedicated Facebook group has also been created. And during the past year, its membership has increased by over 10,000, now exceeding 26,000 members.

And while the Peregrine Falcons and their nesting home have only recently been gaining popularity, Dr Hurley has been invested in the project since 1991, after the first pair was first noticed at the building.

Discovering the failed hatches of the breeding pair at the time, wooden trays and sand were put in place to make the gutter nest-friendly, and success has followed.

“Normally Peregrine Falcons across Victoria have about a 66 per cent hatch rate, but in this spot they have had an 86 per cent hatch rate,” Dr Hurley said.

Determined for the spot to remain



▲ The four new chicks get used to their new surroundings at 367 Collins St.

secure and undisturbed, Dr Hurley provided the various building managers of 367 Collins St with a specific calendar explaining the nesting season.

It’s a schedule the building has been willing to accommodate through sacrificing disturbing maintenance.

“It is the equivalent to a live David Attenborough series without the narration. And it is great to see the building managers being interested in its educational opportunity,” Dr Hurley said.

And while Melburnians have now left their own “nests” in the wake of lockdowns ending, the Peregrine Falcon chicks will soon be following suit.

Typically hanging around until early summer after learning to fly and hunt, the chicks are chased out of the nesting territory to embark on their own adventure.

It’s a bittersweet moment for their dedicated audience, which has been lucky enough to witness the remarkable working of nature from inside their own four walls ●

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Your City of Melbourne community update

VIBRANT LIFESTYLE, STAMP DUTY SAVINGS TO ATTRACT PEOPLE TO LIVE IN MELBOURNE

Whether you're a first home-buyer, an upsizer or an empty-nester there's no place like Melbourne to call home.

The vibrancy, atmosphere and sense of community in the city are proving to be huge drawcards for property buyers.

Research commissioned by the City of Melbourne found more than half (56 per cent) of first home buyers surveyed are likely to consider buying in Melbourne, with many citing the allure of the city and a desire to be close to the action.

While 48 per cent of those already living in Melbourne said they were also considering buying property in the area.

Nearly half (43 per cent) of those looking to buy in the city were in the market for an apartment or unit, with features such as natural light, views and communal areas.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said Melbourne continues to be one of the world's most liveable cities, despite the challenges it has faced during the pandemic.

"These results show that Melbourne has maintained its allure," the Lord Mayor said.

"This city has so much to offer, from its beautiful gardens and eateries, to the incredible festivals and sporting matches that will return now that we are out of lockdown.

"Nothing compares to Melbourne, and future home buyers know that."

With more than 6000 apartments in Melbourne for sale and rent, there's never been a better time to live in the city.

Until 30 June 2022, a 50 per cent stamp duty concession is available for new residential properties valued at up to \$1 million within the City of Melbourne.

A full 100 per cent stamp duty exemption is also available for new residential properties that have been on the market for more than 12 months.

Plus, if you're a first home buyer purchasing an off-the-plan property, until 30 June 2023, you qualify for a duty concession if the home is valued at up to \$1 million.



Enviably city skyline views

The discounts could amount to tens-of-thousands of dollars in savings.

"Now buyers have an even better shot at purchasing a home here, and we welcome them with open arms," the Lord Mayor said.

"56 per cent of first home buyers surveyed are likely to consider buying in Melbourne."

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF STAMP DUTY SAVINGS AND ENJOY INNER CITY LIVING

Take advantage of great stamp duty savings when you buy eligible properties in the city between now and 30 June 2022, and enjoy extraordinary everyday living. To find out how you can make the city your local, visit realestate.com.au/thisisyourlocal

CITY APARTMENT OASIS ATTRACTS DESIGNER DUO

A vibrant city lifestyle combined with the ability to retreat to their own space within it, proved an offer too good to refuse for designer duo, Josh and Matt.

Hailing from the suburbs of Sydney, the couple moved to their brand new apartment on the 50th floor of 380 Melbourne in February and say they have never felt more at home.

"Apartment living suits us perfectly. We love the views, the amenities and just having more time to enjoy our home," they said.

"We love the energy of the city. As soon as you step out of our building you're at the doorstep of amazing restaurants, beautiful art galleries and great shopping destinations. Not to mention all the greenery and parks throughout the city.

"We love exploring all the laneways in the city, there's so many great small businesses to discover and the street art you come across is always interesting and evolving. Being within walking distance to pretty much anything you need is also so handy. The city lifestyle is very convenient and can be really tailored to your individual passions and interests.

"We were able to sell both our cars and we now just walk everywhere or catch the free tram to points of interest."

Their apartment at 380 Melbourne in the heart of the CBD affords the pair an incredible 270-degree view of the city.

"We wanted to enjoy the city lifestyle and at the same time have an oasis we could retreat to. We chose our apartment specifically for the floor to ceiling windows."

Their enviable views of the city skyline feature prominently in the interior design and styling videos they share with their 157,000 followers on TikTok.

The couple run their home décor business [joshandmatt.com.au](https://www.joshandmatt.com.au), hand-making and shipping all their wares from their CBD apartment, which serves as a source of inspiration for their eclectic creations.

When not in their apartment creating designer décor, the pair can be found enjoying the city's enviable lifestyle.

"NGV is our favourite art gallery, we love all the beautiful plants in Guildford Lane, Vintage Sole for great clothing, Uncle Tetsu's cheese tarts are so yummy, the Botanic Gardens is always beautiful to explore, and the Queen Victoria Market has an amazing selection of food and vendors," they said.

"A perfect Melbourne day for us means waking up in the morning to

see the hot air balloons flying over the city. Taking Louis, our cockalier, for a run around at Flagstaff Gardens, a little shopping at local vintage stores, an afternoon exploring the amazing art at NGV and then coming home to watch the sunset from our apartment with some pizza.

"We really think the future of Melbourne is bright and exciting. We are especially excited about the Melbourne arts precinct transformation and think it's going to be an awesome addition to this beautiful city. Melbourne is definitely the place to be."



Josh and Matt in their 50th floor apartment in the heart of the CBD.

Photo: Josh and Matt

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Your City of Melbourne community update

THE CITY IS THEIR PLAYGROUND FOR THIS YOUNG FAMILY

Lighting designer Michael Chazan had never considered living in an apartment until he met his now wife Ying Ang.

Having spent most of her adult life flying around the world for work as a documentary photographer, apartment living had become the way of life for Ying, who valued the convenience of being able to lock up and leave at a moment's notice.

"When we decided to make a home together we resolved to do it in Melbourne, but in an apartment, as dipping in and out of town was still a big part of our lives and the relative convenience of apartment living was undeniable," Michael said.

"Despite this, I was initially sceptical about many other aspects of the apartment lifestyle and as such aspired to get a house somewhere as our family grew. Somewhat ironically, it was only with the birth of our son Oska Shūbi that I really became an inner-city apartment convert."

A three-bedroom apartment at the top end of town on Spring Street is now home for the young family who "love feeling entrenched in a vibrant, diverse and stimulating community".

"The city is a melting pot and exposing our family to such cultural and experiential diversity in the course of our daily routines is something we really value," Michael said.

"Over the years I have enjoyed living in many suburbs in Greater Melbourne, but often found a certain homogeneity to them. Living in the heart of a metropolis like Melbourne tends to expose you to a more diverse set of people and more fluxing set of experiences.

"As our son grows, it has also been amazing to see him claim the city's streets as his own urban playground. To me it seems like a pretty amazing and stimulating environment to grow up in.

"During lockdown, the centre of Melbourne has taken on an altogether different feel. It has been interesting to see neighbourhoods transform and embrace this new identity. Likewise, the way we engage with our environment has changed too and we have found ourselves venturing to parts of the city we had not previously explored. As a consequence, we have stumbled across some favourite new little spots, like Bakemono on Drewery Lane, where we get our daily coffee and pastry fix.

"After our morning coffee, we usually wind our way up to the courtyard of the Melbourne Museum, where Oska Shūbi likes to skateboard. After that we might grab a banh mi for lunch and debate where our afternoon adventures should take us - Fitzroy Gardens, the Botanical Garden, the Tan, or a meander along the Yarra. Then at night, we head

downstairs to grab some amazing food. Even though eating out hasn't been an option lately, eating at home overlooking the city skyline isn't such a bad back-up plan."

And while their apartment is adorned with Ying's photography and Michael's bespoke furniture and lighting from his design studio, Moda Piera, it's also the urban masterpieces they can see from their windows that makes their space like no other.

"We're incredibly fortunate to have an amazing view across some of the most beautiful and iconic parts of Melbourne. From our windows we look directly on to Treasury Gardens, Parliament, the Royal Exhibition Building, the MCG, and all the way out over the Dandenong Ranges.

"We are also really lucky that some of our favourite bars and restaurants are literally downstairs from us: Kenzan, Cecconi's, Cumulus and Di Stasio Citta are all within a 30-second walk from our front door and we are glad to now call many of these people our friends.

"One thing people might not think about living in such a big city, is that there is a real sense of community. We have so many 'local' cafes, bars and restaurants where we feel like part of the furniture."

Suffice to say that after a reluctant start to apartment life, Michael now finds it difficult to imagine living any other way.



Michael, Ying and Oska Shūbi love the sense of community that comes with living in the city.

IN-BRIEF

FOOTPATH BLITZ

Pedestrians will have a spring in their step thanks to a footpath blitz to upgrade some of the city's busiest thoroughfares.

The City of Melbourne has carried out \$2.4 million in footpath repairs as the city prepares for the return of visitors.

Locally-sourced bluestone has been used to upgrade more than 2,600 sqm of footpaths across nine city sites.

MELBOURNE AWARDS

The Melbourne Awards are the City of Melbourne's highest accolade, celebrating inspirational people and organisations that help make this city a world leader.

The awards recognise significant contributions in areas including community, innovation, arts, events, LGBTIQ+ and sustainability.

See the winners announced in a television special on Channel 9 at 2pm on Saturday 13 November.

TESTING GROUNDS MOVES TO QVM

One of Melbourne's most unique arts spaces, Testing Grounds, will move from Southbank to the Queen Victoria Market where it will become a key feature of the new Market Square pop-up park.

Testing Grounds will be a hub for local artists to create installations and events to drive creative opportunities and visitation.

The move is funded by the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund, a partnership between the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne.

ANNUAL REPORT OUT NOW

Find out how the City of Melbourne supported the city and the community during the pandemic in the 2020-21 Annual Report, available to read online now at melbourne.vic.gov.au/annualreport

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CITY OF MELBOURNE

“All hands-on deck” to help new arrival of Afghan refugees

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COMMUNITY

For Amelia Tauoqooqo, a Cohealth nurse on the COVID-19 frontline in Melbourne's CBD, the call to assist Afghan refugees has been heart-breaking but concedes “you'll never find a more pragmatic, resilient group of people”.

“I've been working in the migration health space for 10 years and I definitely think this is probably the worst I've seen in terms of immediate separation of immediate family members,” she said of the hundreds of Afghans who recently arrived in Melbourne after enduring a traumatic evacuation from their home country in the chaotic days after the Taliban stormed the capital Kabul in August.

“All the scenes you saw on the news four or five weeks ago were a fairly accurate depiction of what we're hearing firsthand.”

Ms Tauoqooqo, who is part Cohealth's refugee and asylum seeker health team, which has been working in partnership with other agencies, said it had been “all hands of deck” in supporting 700 Afghan refugees who arrived last month in Melbourne and were currently staying at hotels in the CBD.

“Everything has been really difficult the last couple of weeks, getting their immediate needs met because the services were quite overwhelmed,” she said.

“We're hearing lots of stories ... they are mums you have been separated from young dependent children and husbands and wives that have been separated.”



▲ Cohealth nurse Amelia Tauoqooqo (centre) with colleagues at the Multicultural Hub in the CBD.

While interview requests with Afghan refugees were declined due to security reasons, Ms Tauoqooqo said some of the Afghans had arrived with just the “clothes on their backs” as well as a backpack with few items such as their mobile phones and birth certificates.

“People are arriving really cold ... they weren't prepared for Melbourne weather,” she said.

“It's obviously devastating but you'll never find a more pragmatic, resilient group of people who are seeking asylum,” she said, adding “they're excited to get on with it and get jobs

and start their lives”.

In addition to vaccinations at pop up clinics at the Melbourne Multicultural Hub and in West Melbourne, Ms Tauoqooqo and her team have been providing telehealth consultations and creating individualised health plans and working with case managers to get the Afghan refugees the care they need.

“A lot of the work has been around trying to coordinate build relationships with local providers who are happy to see this group without Medicare,” she said.

As the needs of the Afghanistan refugees

become more apparent, Cohealth chief executive of Nicole Bartholomeusz said it was vital that the wider community was able to “extend its support, understanding and assistance to the Afghan community”.

Among those stepping up to help has been Wyndham Rotary Club which teamed up with community organisations to distribute meals, toys, clothing, and other essentials for the Afghan refugees.

“We provided to Wyndham Park Community about 180 packs of Indian style food which was five kilos of rice, one kilo of lentils and another kilo of broad beans and dried peas plus a few packets of biscuits, and jar of Indian pickles,” Phil Harcher, community director of Wyndham Rotary Club, said.

A further 150 family size toiletry packs and a hundred individual toiletry packs donated by Pinchapoo were also handed out.

“We just do it because we know we can make a difference,” Mr Harcher said.

“We don't need accolades, the accolades we get are by knowing we've done a good job.”

A spokesperson for the Department of Home Affairs said the initial intake of 3000 Afghan citizens would be drawn from this year's humanitarian program, which is set at 13,750 places.

“The government anticipates this initial allocation will increase further over the course of 2021-22,” the spokesperson said.

“While the arrivals and settlement of the emergency evacuation in Afghanistan is progressing, the welfare, privacy, safety and security of this cohort is our priority.” ●



▲ Miyuki Nakahara in her basement hideaway.



▲ Michel Dubois on his prominent new corner.

Booked out for Friday night

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
BUSINESS

A list of ingredients has just been projected onto the wall of Izakaya Den. The list is dated August 4, just before Victoria was plunged back into lockdown.

Restaurateur Miyuki Nakahara has fired up the laptop to update the list for their re-opening on Friday, October 22 with 20 guests.

“I'm not sure if it still works after three months,” she said. A fridge has conked out during that period.

The list includes King Edward potatoes, Japanese eggplant, rice puffs, cumquat kosho and Murray cod, all used in one of the restaurant's interpretations of *izakaya* (Japanese pub food).

Izakaya Den has just a small sign next to a flight of stairs into the basement of the old Telstra building on Russell St so they're not relying on passing trade.

“In Tokyo you find many places underground, hidden away in laneways,” Miyuki said. “They enjoy not being too obvious.”

Staff members were gathering for a planning meeting, including head chef Gerard who came across from Ezard, in the Adelphi Hotel, when it closed down.

“After last year's lockdown we lost all our staff,” Miyuki explained. “The new team started last October. It feels like we are new. We are very lucky to have them.”

She and her two partners have been in business for some time and they are confident about moving ahead with changes to the business.

Across town, Michel Dubois opened up in Scott Alley 15 years ago and offered galettes (pancakes) from the window of a small shop in what was then an extension of Port Phillip Arcade.

As Melbourne's hospitality industry opens up for its

latest comeback, Michel will be proudly trading from a new restaurant on the corner of Flinders Lane.

Roule Galette has a formula that worked. Michel offered more than lemon and sugar with his crepes. An immigrant from Brittany, the home of cheese, he also offered savoury pancakes. He used 300 kilograms of Emmental a week, he said.

The state government has been supporting both of these venues with \$5000 a week and that's welcome but for an experienced hospo person a hand-out is not what keeps them going.

When the Port Phillip Arcade was demolished a few years ago to make way for the rail tunnel, Michel said they had already built up enough clientele to survive. “We were in the Trip Advisor Top 10,” he said.

There was a period when Metro Tunnel installed astro turf to beautify Scott Alley after the demolition and this attracted guitar-playing travellers, causing complaints from residents in Bible House above.

Michel rode the wave but he has been cautious since opening another outlet in an arcade near the Melbourne Aquarium and losing nearly \$350,000. He chose the corner site on Flinders Lane to consolidate his business but custom was so good he's keeping all three places going.

Miyuki is similarly impatient to get back to what she does best, front-of-house and customer relations. “You can't really call it business,” she said. “In the last 18 months we've only been open for five months.”

She was forced to make radical changes during the lockdown, including introducing a set menu to deal with the uncertainty of cancellations. People now pay a deposit on booking at Izakaya Den, which covers the food then the rest is paid on the night.

The restaurant was booked out for the first Friday and Saturday nights of the re-opening. “We still have loyal customers,” Miyuki said ●

Lockdown-weary lawyer captures Melbourne's marvellous bygone era in new book

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
HISTORY

A lawyer who began a “little project” of posting historical photos of Melbourne on social media in a bid to beat pandemic blues, never imagined he would publish a book.

Chris Macheras said he spent hours during last year's lockdown collating photos of Melbourne's enchanting past which he then shared on his *Old Vintage Melbourne* Instagram account.

“I just sort of found these photos online in high-res and I thought you know what, this would be a really cool idea on Instagram,” he said after sourcing photos on websites such as the State Library of Victoria, the National Archives of Australia, and the Public Records Office Victoria.

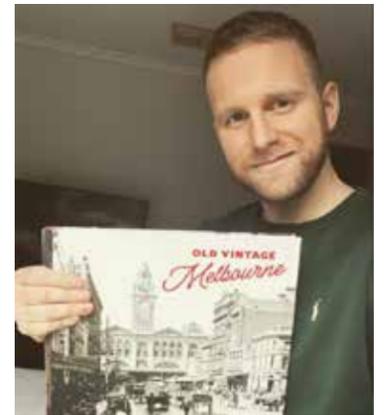
“I guess I was just bored, I wasn't commuting every day to work to the city and back, so I had a few extra hours up my sleeve.”

Mr Macheras, who is also a hobby-artist and has always had a “fascination with buildings and cities,” said he was blown away by how popular the Instagram account became.

The page – which was launched in June 2020 and shows hundreds of photos from an old Foys department store van in Flinders Lane in 1948 to crowds of people walking down Bourke St in 1900 – has now attracted nearly 80,000 followers.

“It was just sort of something I was interested in and it blew up,” Mr Macheras said, who has now showcased his work in a new book titled *Old Vintage Melbourne* – a concept he initially shrugged off as “no chance no one's interested”.

“It was just a little project that I started because just out of interest, there was no real intention behind it for it to become what it's become,” he said, but added he was spurred on by



▲ Chris Macheras with his new book.

his followers to publish his work in print.

He said the whole experience was a great outlet to escape the monotony of last year's lockdown, which he also used to do some architectural sketching of Melbourne.

The book, which went on sale on October 18, reminisces Melbourne's important heritage and its development over the years.

One of Mr Macheras' favourite photos depicts Swanston St in 1858 which he said was “considered to be the first ever photo of Melbourne”.

“This is really cool because where there should be cabs there's just all horses and carriage and you've got the building on the right that was demolished and it's where our Town Hall now sits.”

Another standout included a photo of a packed Flinders St Station ballroom when it opened in 1910.

“You look at that photo and it looks so new, you can almost smell the fresh paint, and now it's fallen into real disrepair,” Mr Macheras said.

His book also contains rare photos of people smiling, at a time when it was customary to have stoic, dignified expressions ●

Indigenous artist creates jewellery to unite community

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

Indigenous artist Cassie Leatham's exhibition at the Koorie Heritage Trust's (KHT) *Blak Jewellery – Finding Past Linking Present* weaves together her experiences as a Taungurung woman in more ways than one.

As a bonafide master weaver, music teacher, traditional dancer, former paramedic and mother, Ms Leatham's jewellery is delicately made by hand using ornate bone, organic thread and silver using techniques she has learned over a lifetime.

And despite facing multiple obstacles along her journey including racism, a medical condition in her right arm which requires surgery, and various accidents, Ms Leatham is as devoted as you can be to helping local communities – indigenous and non-indigenous.

Apologising for side-tracking the conversation, Ms Leatham began the interview with *CBD News* with a story about how a car crash stopped her from teaching a Zoom lesson that morning.

"We live in a farming community rurally, and one of the farming trucks came flying past," she said.

"I can see everything from my house, and I was setting up for my Zoom, and that's when I saw the [Toyota] Camry coming down [the road]. Then I heard squealing brakes and then a bang."

"An old farmer I know who's half-blind drove around the corner and clipped the truck, bumped his head and got a bit of a concussion. He's okay, but he's 92."

Having previously worked as a paramedic for 11 years in a small town where she was the first Aboriginal paramedic, Ms Leatham said the adrenaline kicked in, and before she knew it, she was running down the road to make sure everyone was alright.

Caring for people, art and teaching are all things Ms Leatham has always done exceptionally well.

It's how she's managed to become only the second indigenous artist ever to be commissioned to do a jewellery collection at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV).

Her journey to the *Blak Jewellery – Finding Past Linking Present* exhibition currently showing at the KHT began in 2020, when the design team at NGV suggested she should apply for KHT's Blak Design program.

Blak Design is an initiative to support First Nations Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, craftspeople and designers living in Victoria through a targeted professional development and mentoring program, developed in partnership with the NGV and RMIT University.

Ms Leatham was accepted, and she immediately put her head down and started creating.

She said what started as three pieces of



▲ Indigenous artist Cassie Leatham is dedicated to helping communities through art and teaching. Picture: Kelly Coleman.



▲ Cassie Leatham's jewellery made from silver, bone and organic thread on display at the Koorie Heritage Trust. Pictures: Fred Kroh.

jewellery "manifested" into 80, selecting the ones on display today due to the stories and connections behind them.

"It's called *Past Reflections* because when I look in the mirror, I see spirit with me," she said.

"Spirit is with me every day – even when I'm asleep. Today I did weeding, I went hiking, and I collected crow feathers. I've come home and now I'm going to be weaving – every day is culture for me."

Ms Leatham began her career as a music

teacher in the coastal town of Loch Sport.

But as she moved from school to school, she noticed culture was lacking in the curriculum.

"From there, I became an 'ambo' and found racism was bad on the job, and I thought I needed to heal the community and bring them art," she said.

Ms Leatham was at one stage simultaneously working at the East Gippsland Aboriginal Art Corporation, as a paramedic and music teacher while raising a child as a single mother.

After finding something "had to give", she dropped music teaching and started her own business, Wild Blak Arts, where she sells her artwork and teaches various indigenous workshops including traditional weaving, possum skin drum making and bush tukka.

"I'm here in the present to teach the future generation. It's about the children, I want to be a great role model to non-indigenous and indigenous children," she said.

Ms Leatham has a PhD and lectures at various universities. She also has degrees in archaeology, anthropology and has recently taken up silver-smithing. Her work has been exhibited around Australia and internationally, including the Melbourne Magistrates Court.

But when she's not making artwork, weaving or teaching, Ms Leatham loves riding her bike.

She's almost completed a 5000km bike ride raising funds and awareness for suicide in the Aboriginal community, as well as for cancer.

Ms Leatham said a large portion of the money she makes from her artwork goes towards Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation in Healesville, Beyond Blue, Lifeline and the KHT.

"I'm also donating three artworks to the hospital in Sale because they saved my dad's life," she said.

"I'd like to acknowledge specifically how grateful I am for the opportunity from the KHT, Laura Deakin, Blanche Tilden, Lindy McSwan, the NGV and RMIT. Without them, I wouldn't have had this opportunity."

Although a medical condition has left Ms Leatham needing surgery in her right arm, which she cannot use to weave now, she said luckily, she was ambidextrous and could still use her left arm. And if all of that wasn't enough, she's currently working on a book about her blue budgie, "Mr Beaky" who she said could speak in three different Aboriginal languages and liked to keep her company while she weaved traditional, Aboriginal mats.

The exhibition *Blak Jewellery – Finding Past, Linking Present* is open until Sunday, February 27, 2022 at the KHT, Fed Square ●

For more information:
korieheritagetrust.com.au

HERITAGE

Preserving street art

WORDS BY *Tristan Davies*

A recent October council meeting gave the nod to a development which ticks many boxes for heritage, creating a new tower with a generous setback from the heritage facade of 100 Franklin St.

The plans keep heritage cast iron interior structures and add new architecture which references the site's fascinating history tied to one of the inventors of modern refrigeration, James Harrison.

All this has, however, comes at the cost of losing an entire half of Blender Lane, one of Melbourne's longest running and well-loved street art laneways, with the plans replacing its eastern brick wall with a wider laneway and glass retail frontages.

This exposes a dilemma in the Melbourne Planning Scheme in which widening of



pedestrian links and "activation" are prioritised as public goods that often come into conflict with the narrow, graffiti-filled laneways that give Melbourne so much character, which are much harder to legislate protection for.

As councillors rightly pointed out, the legalisation and overt protection of street art often conflicts with the very counter-cultural reasons we have such a great street art scene

in the first place and can lead to underground artists abandoning these sanctioned walls.

We do, however, need to find some middle ground here, or run the risk of many more authentic Melbourne laneways becoming generic glass walls incapable of supporting street art. This development comes just as construction on the Walk Arcade on Bourke St obliterated half of Union Lane's street art, and a less known but equally interesting laneway was flattened for the Metro Tunnel's State Library Station work.

Perhaps the retention of blank walls with a "live and let live" covenant between owners and artists needs to become a tool the council can use to balance alongside the desire for "active frontages" when assessing developments that include lane frontages, as developers will always opt for the option that gives them the easiest way of attracting high paying tenants over any other public realm considerations not enforced by policy.

Cities that overregulate street art and mandate where it can and can't appear are often left

with nothing besides safe commissioned murals, with no backing from the kind of authentic legal grey area counterculture Melbourne is famous for. But this also can't mean a free-for-all where owners' rights to maximise profits and develop as easily as possible comes at the cost of the street art, which helps make Melbourne a great place to live and invest in.

One positive to come out of the debate was a motion from the council requesting the new Design Excellence Committee set up to oversee better design of large developments, which will also consider facilitation and protection of street art. This is something we hope will lead to more nuances being allowed in planning debates that effect street art and broader laneway culture in the future.

From Melbourne Heritage Action's perspective, the focus on active frontages and more pedestrian links through our city is a good goal but can't come at the expense of the street art and the sometimes "inactive" solid brick walls that also define some of our best hidden gems ●

PRECINCTS

A blockbuster summer ahead for Chinatown Melbourne

As the city wakes from another COVID-19 induced slumber, the CBD's iconic Chinatown Precinct Association Inc. (CPA) is set to welcome locals and visitors in droves, with a jam-packed schedule of events and offers to end the year.

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Spearheaded by CPA president, Danny Doon, and vice-president, Eng Lim, Chinatown will come alive with upgraded outdoor dining capacity and shelter, ornamental trusses covering Little Bourke St and a huge day of festivities in mid-December.

"We want to make sure we welcome back locals and visitors in a safe and sustainable way. Families, partners, from near or far, it's an incredibly exciting time to be a part of the Chinatown Melbourne precinct," Mr Doon said.

"Along with many events, we are continually working with the City of Melbourne to improve outdoor parklets for our traders, which will see awnings installed to protect their staff and diners."

"These covers will protect diners from the rain, wind or heat to a certain degree. With these parklets with shade covers, the restaurateurs will be able to serve more diners."

The awning covered parklets will be a first of its kind in the municipality and will be unique to Chinatown as part of a council trial.

According to Mr Doon, many of the traders in the precinct do not have the capacity for outdoor dining due to a lack of space or commercial viability and will hold off opening until further restrictions are eased.

With upwards of 25 outdoor dining parklets and freshly installed ornamental trusses stretching the three blocks from Spring St to Swanston St, Chinatown Melbourne will become a hive of activity and a driving force in the CBD's post-pandemic recovery.

During Melbourne's first day out of lockdown on October 22, the City of Melbourne's

Pedestrian Counter System showed a peak increase of 1059 per cent compared to the four week average along Little Bourke St at 8pm, making Chinatown Melbourne the most visited section of the CBD.

While supporting its members' return to business will occupy much of the precinct's time in the coming months, the CPA has an enormous day of celebrations earmarked for Sunday, December 19.

The day will see a culmination of three events: the twice re-scheduled Mid-Autumn Festival 2021, a "welcome back to Chinatown Melbourne" special offer and a Chinese style Christmas all held at Chinatown Square on Cohen Place.

Festivities will begin at 11am and run to 7pm with post Mid-Autumn Festival lantern making starting proceedings, followed by stage and Lion Dancing performances.

As part of the welcome back to Chinatown Melbourne offer, attendees will be treated to complimentary barbecue pork buns and dumplings and encouraged to continue their day of culinary wonder by dining or shopping within the iconic cultural precinct.

Capping off a huge day of celebration for the precinct will be the Christmas in Chinatown Melbourne event with Christmas trees and memorabilia among traditional Chinese lanterns, sending out the festive season in style.

CPA vice-president Eng Lim said she welcomed the council's "yes" attitude which would see Chinatown Melbourne become one of the most active in the world.

"The Lord Mayor, Sally Capp and CEO, Justin Hanney, have been very supportive of us, along with rest of the council," Ms Lim said.

"I believe we will be the most successful



Chinatown in world. If you look around, our restaurants have stuck it out, they are willing to give it a go."

"We will strive forward together. Supported by the council, our traders work will continue to work hard and are not frightened to have a go."

The CPA will also invite our regional Victorian compatriots to rediscover the distinctive flavours, sights, and passions of Chinatown Melbourne with a special offer travel voucher scheme.

Together with the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government, CPA will launch the "Chinatown Melbourne Travel Voucher Scheme".

The scheme includes five \$20 vouchers and value-added offers to meals at participating businesses for regional Victorians who book a minimum of two consecutive nights stay in a participating accommodation provider,

between December 17 and 20.

Proof of regional residency is required, with dining vouchers provided upon check in at accommodation.

Along with a state-wide promotional approach, the CPA has been campaigning tirelessly for the return of international students.

"Melbourne needs students and tourists back, we know that, but without them it will be a long way back to pre-pandemic levels," Mr Doon said. "We have been lobbying to the council and the Victorian Government to push the Federal Government to get students back."

"It is looking like we will get 120 students returning each week throughout December." ●

For more information, visit:
chinatownmelbourne.com.au

CBD LOCAL

Glad to be back

Juries could be reintroduced at the Supreme Court at the end of October and even though there is no news yet about the County Court, barristers are taking heart.

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

With a back log of more than 1700 cases waiting to be heard at the County Court there will be plenty of work ahead.

Until then however, lawyers agree that it has been a really difficult time for those working in crime.

"I don't have a full practice," barrister John Moore said of the Melbourne Bar, but at least he's back occasionally in the CBD, including on Vaxxed Melbourne Day where he worked in the office.

John has spent more time with his children than he has at the bar during the pandemic, learning how to balance home and work life and picking up a few new skills on Zoom and Webex.

He feels smaller with a lower horizon but he can still ham it up for the camera, having learnt how to use his hands and facial expressions over the lockdown.

He says there is less solemnity with online performances and they call for a different skill set.

"A lot of people say there's a lot to be said for assessing the demeanor and body language of a person," he said. "It's harder on a screen."

He says that work becomes a performative act on screen for the camera. "Your presentation is head and shoulders. You have to be more compelling."

Barristers have been offered training by NIDA Corporate and it is possible to cross examine and make points of order with some trials using a mix of court and online but there can be mishaps.

A couple of months back a party to a case on Zoom forgot to turn off his mike and called someone "a f...ing idiot", which was broadcast in court.

John is not alone in having to adjust to justice at a distance. There have been few barristers in the CBD's legal district during this long, lean period of isolation.

"When people say that it has been bad that's because there've been no jury trials," John explained. "That has a knock-on effect. It shrinks the pool [of work] dramatically. I don't know anyone who's been decimated. It's an overall reduction."

The father of two was in town on Vaxxed Melbourne Day catching up with a mate at Patricia's, a coffee house at the back of the Supreme Court, after a stint in his Lonsdale St office.



▲ Barrister John Moore finally catching up with his barista in town.

"I've missed socialising," he said, trying to put the experience of lockdown into perspective.

"Psychologically, our horizons have been reduced by being at home all the time. We've been fatigued by small hassles that add up to a big impact."

He said the big lockdown last year was the most difficult. Like many in his profession, John was on JobKeeper and looking after his kids, both under five, with no child care available.

"There was a time in 2020 when it was very lean," he said. "It's not as lean now because the courts have online up and running."

During the second major lockdown, he has

been coming sometimes into the office as an authorised worker and his kids have been entitled to go into day care.

But most of the work hasn't been on trials. "I do other stuff, not trials. I'm working at about two thirds," he said.

There have been some compensations, mostly for defendants waiting for trials, in that they've received lighter sentences for pleading guilty.

"There is a heightened public benefit of a case being resolved," John said. The Court of Appeal ruled in the Woyboyes decision that "the discount for pleading guilty in COVID times should be elevated." ●

Thinking big, acting local

For second term councillor and Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, the ability to deliver on big ambitions at a community level is what inspires him most about working in local government.

As a father of three and husband to wife Felicity, Cr Reece is first and foremost a family man. But second to that, he is a self-described “workaholic”. And with the number of hats he wears in the community, it’s easy to see why.

When it comes to the City of Melbourne, Cr Reece is considered an influential figure within the current council team not only as Deputy Lord Mayor, but as chair of the “extremely busy” planning portfolio.

He is also the deputy lead of the finance, governance and risk portfolios, and represents the council on the Committee for Melbourne, Melbourne Action Plan Implementation (IMAP) Committee, Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute Advisory Board and the Melbourne Art Trust.



But away from the council, it doesn’t stop there ...

In continuing his “Melbourne” theme, Cr Reece is an executive in Chancellery at the University of Melbourne, holds an academic position of principal fellow and teaches at the Melbourne School of Government as his day job.

Having also previously served as a director of the social enterprise street magazine *The Big Issue* for more than a decade, he continues his passion for giving back today as the current chairman of global men’s health charity Movember – a not-for-profit founded by his friends here in Melbourne.

With his sense of duty to the community manifesting in so many ways, he said he had been raised from a young age to appreciate the importance of social justice – something which he carries into every aspect of his role as a councillor.

“I grew up in quite a religious family, so I would characterise my dad as a big influence on me,” Cr Reece said.

“He was very much part of a Catholic social justice tradition. He still works as a volunteer for St Vincent De Paul to this day and those values of community service were instilled in me from a really young age.”

“I think I was very much brought up to see that as part of who you are, you serve your family, you serve your community. So, I hope when I look back across my working life, people will say he was a person who dedicated his life to the service of the community. I really hope that’s seen as something that defines me.”

Cr Reece said his favourite part about serving as a councillor at the City of Melbourne, often considered as somewhat of a quasi-state government, was that “we get to think big, but act local”.

It’s a mindset that perhaps stems not only from his many community service roles, but from a more decorated history in politics than what many readers may know about ...

While having never been elected to political office prior to becoming a councillor, he’s spent his fair share of time working in them as a highly regarded figure with the Australian Labor Party (ALP).

Not only has he previously served as state secretary and campaign director of the ALP’s

Victorian Branch, but he was also a senior advisor to former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, and former Victorian Premiers Steve Bracks and John Brumby.

Before entering the political domain, he worked as a lawyer and a journalist, and he continues to keep his hand in the media with regular appearances on Sky News and contributions to *The Age*.

That ability and desire to always “think big” has had a significant effect on his approach as a councillor, and he said he was “fired up” to bring Melbourne back better than ever from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The joy I get from serving at a local government is just as much as those other tiers of government, the work is different but it’s just as satisfying and rewarding,” he said.

“Melbourne is a great city. The world’s best city because we’ve always had big ambitions for ourselves but those ambitions get delivered through actions that are taken at a local level and so I love the fact that you can bring those things together.”

“Melbourne should see itself as a global hotspot, a global leader for architecture, design and sustainability. I’m really fired up. I’ve never been more fired up in my life. It’s my mission to help Melbourne bounce back better.”

But while he’s so far enjoyed a successful career in public service, it didn’t necessarily start off that way ...

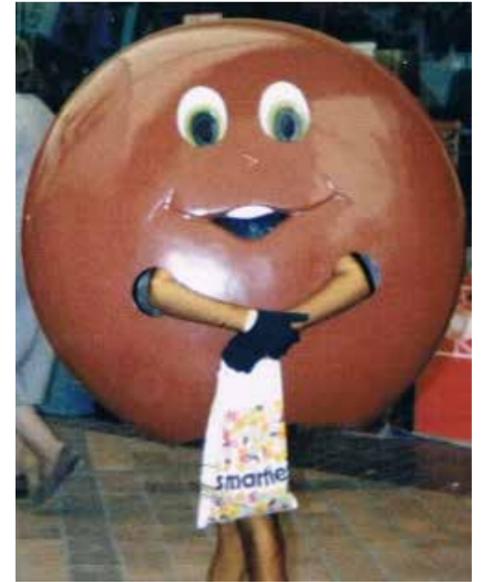
In a stunning admission to *CBD News*, he said that while he’d held many jobs over the course of his career, there had been few as important as his very first – dressing up as a fibreglass Smartie kid in the Moomba Parade in the ‘80s!

Working for the former chocolate company Rowntree-Hoadley, he said his promising career as a Smartie parading down Swanston St was tragically cut short after his “poo brown” colour was voted out in the “Great Smartie Elections” in favour of a new blue smartie.

“It was my first taste of election defeat,” he said.

Nevertheless, that same thrift for events and passion for Melbourne will no doubt serve him well as the city recovers from COVID, and when it came to boosting liveability and attracting more residents to the CBD, he said it was all about “the buzz”.

Between bringing international students



▲ Photo evidence of Cr Reece during his days as a Smartie!

back, a targeted “Live Melbourne” campaign and the range of activations and events on the horizon, he said the opportunities for renewal were “exciting” for the local community.

“I think it starts with bringing back the buzz – it’s not just a cliché it’s part of the secret sauce that made living in the CBD such a great experience and so attractive,” he said ●



Sean Car

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METRO TUNNEL

Metro Tunnel cross passage construction complete in the west

Following excavation of the Metro Tunnel’s twin nine-kilometre tunnels earlier this year, Melbourne’s biggest public transport project has reached another digging milestone.

Cross passage construction for the western section of the tunnel is now complete, with 14 of these important safety features now in place between the tunnel entrance at Kensington and the new Town Hall Station in the CBD.

These passages connect the tunnels about every 230 metres, allowing people and emergency services to move between them in an emergency.

There will be 26 cross passages in total, with works to dig and fit out the remaining 12 passages in the east expected to be finished by early next year.

While cross passages are smaller than the

twin rail tunnels they connect, they are still an impressive size at four metres high – about the size of a single-storey house.

At each cross-passage site, crews first carry out geotechnical drilling from above, to check ground conditions. In some places, grout is injected into the soil to strengthen it before digging begins underground at the tunnel level.

The passages are built by breaking through the walls of the rail tunnels, which are braced with steel, and then excavating between them with equipment including a wall saw and an excavator-mounted jackhammer.

Once mining is complete the cross passages are reinforced with steel, waterproofed, and lined with concrete, before a floor slab is poured.

Construction of each cross passage takes around six months, with work taking place concurrently across different sections of the Metro Tunnel.

As each cross passage is completed, floor slabs are poured in the rail tunnels and fit-out starts, with the installation of cable trays, brackets and plumbing.



▲ A Metro Tunnel worker in one of the cross passages during the waterproofing stage.

At the same time, major progress is being made across the Metro Tunnel Project’s five new underground stations at Arden, Parkville, State Library, Town Hall and Anzac (St Kilda Rd), with the project on track to open to passengers in 2025 ●

For more information:
metrotunnel.vic.gov.au

HISTORY

Singing their songs at the Central Telegraph Office, Elizabeth St, early 1920s

You see before you a group of telegraph dispatch operators at the Central Telegraph Office at Elizabeth St, taken in the early 1920s before its removal to Post Office Place.

These highly skilled clerks were responsible for the telegraphs that sang their songs (apologies to Dire Straits) within suburban Melbourne, throughout regional Victoria and other states, and overseas.

The arrival of the telegraph some 70 years earlier had a huge impact on Australian society. No one had to ride from one place to another with dispatches. No one had to rely on the postal service to deliver messages by mail. With the coming of the telegraph, news could be delivered in an instant.

Suddenly, Australia was less isolated from the rest of the world. Individuals could be connected quickly and relatively easily. This was as close to text messaging as it got. The first telegraph message to Melbourne brought the news of Eureka Stockade in December 1854 and the telegraph service thrived for the next 90 years before telephones started to take over in the mid-20th century.

It seems incredible now, but when this photograph was taken most people did not have telephones in their homes. Many did not have electricity or hot water. Some did not have running water inside their homes. There were whole suburbs yet to be sewered. The postie made deliveries twice a day and with a bit of luck you could get a reply to a letter you sent in the morning by the afternoon post. There was even a Saturday delivery. If that wasn't instant enough for you, you could always send

a telegram – expensive, but as close to instant as you could get.

This photograph, part of the richly diverse images collection of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, was taken in the suburban section of the Telegraph Office in the early 1920s at a time when many returned servicemen were employed by the Post Master General's Department. It is probable that some of the men you see here had served in the 1st AIF. The women appear to be older, most wearing their hair in the practical "bob" of the day. The woman in the foreground has been identified as Miss Williams, former postmistress of the great Menzies Hotel on the corner of Bourke and William streets.

In some respects, this scene reflects a modern workplace. Here was an employment opportunity for women that moved beyond what had been available traditionally. It is not a segregated workplace, only men or only women, although it appears that the men and women sat and worked separately even if they did share the workspace. This was a skilled occupation. Messages were sent in Morse code, the dot dash system familiar to most of us as the means by which the emergency SOS signal is transmitted. So, clerks in this workplace had to be proficient in Morse code, as well as be able to decipher the original handwritten message that the customer had submitted at the main reception desk. You can see the process here with Miss Williams holding the printed message in her left hand as she taps it out and sends it on its way.

It is clear, though, that this workplace would not pass today's health and safety standards.



Those hard chairs alone look daunting enough, but there were other difficulties. The Telegraph Office moved from William St to the Elizabeth St premises in 1872, so by the time this photograph was taken, it had been operating there for 50 years. From the first, it was an unsatisfactory workplace. A decade after its opening, newspapers referred to its "disgraceful" conditions. The lighting was poor. The room was stuffy. Staff complained of the stench from the Elizabeth St gutters, so it was preferable to keep the windows closed and work in stifling heat in the summer.

Fifty years on, the conditions were not much better. As I look at this image, I feel the hardness of those seats after a long day (or night)

shift. I long for quiet after a day of constant noise. Some of it is generated by the delivery of messages via pneumatic chutes from the main counter in another part of the building. But for the most part, it is the staccato tapping of the Morse code machines sending and receiving telegrams from all over the country that dominates. I doubt that I could have kept up the relentless pace of these dispatch clerks ●



Dr. Cheryl Griffin

ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

WE LIVE HERE

Will short-stay infections force us into lockdown again?

With retail industry still shuttered, it beggars belief that short-stay operators are allowed to endanger residential buildings with potential COVID carriers.

We found one of the most iconic buildings in Melbourne is not immune to the short-stay problem. Even before restrictions were eased, an apartment in the building was listed on Airbnb. The multinational short-stay behemoth should be fined heavily for such a blatant breach of Victoria's COVID restrictions.

The tower's furious manager emailed us in frustration: "The Vic Government can enforce its restrictions on other commercial activity, but not for this. What an absolute joke."

We need a properly considered, COVID-factored response from the government – before selfish short-stays send us into lockdown again.

COVID short-stay partygoers isolate with 1000 residents

On a recent weekend, two apartments on contiguous levels in the inner-city Platinum Tower hosted short-stay, out-of-control parties. The usual chaos ensued with the police arriving late at night, instructing some guests to leave. The ejected guests waited until the coast was clear and were buzzed back into the building, without masks and moving freely between floors.

The organiser of one party was a guest at the other and had undergone a COVID test earlier in the day. The test result came back positive after the party.

This party guest knowingly attended illegal gatherings after being tested and without isolating while waiting for the result.

More drama was to follow with the Department of Health instructing the positive case to isolate in one of the party apartments. A second party guest staying there also tested positive later and was given the same instruction.

The owners' corporation (OC) challenged the department's edicts to no avail – the department insisted that the positive cases had to stay put.

The committee was incensed: "As in most high-rise buildings, air moves freely between apartments on the same floor and between floors via stairwells. There are 437 apartments in this building, and it is completely unsuitable to house a COVID-positive case who does not normally reside here and who clearly has no regard for doing the right thing."

When will the government understand the difficulties faced by residential apartment buildings dealing with COVID?

In this instance, 1000 innocent residents ended up paying the price in anxiety and elevated risks. And it's all because of a reckless party organiser who should have been isolating, not conducting an illegal COVID-fest.

The residents are understandably angry and frightened.

Cladding update

We have an update from Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV).

Cladding rectification has been completed on 60 buildings in Victoria, funded by CSV.

Another 140 CSV funded projects are underway, while a further 53 buildings have funding agreements in place.

CSV chief executive Dan O'Brien said, "We will continue to work with owners of the highest risk buildings because that is the best way to reduce risk for Victorians overall."

The CSV report said, "Buildings with the highest level of combustible cladding risk are referred to CSV by the Victorian Building Authority or local councils. CSV then carries out its own assessment to prioritise buildings for funding. CSV also offers advice and guidance to owners of buildings that are not eligible for funding but need to take action to reduce risk."

The total size of the funding pool remains undisclosed and we still trying to find out how much is left in the kitty.

If your building has flammable cladding, let us know how your remediation is going.

Committee-stacking scandal continues

Nerrida Blashki Pohl has provided us with an update on her stoush with pleonastic property developers and an incredibly clumsy council ...

"Shockingly, the resident furniture moving lift has been locked to residents for 10 years. All furniture removal goes through the front lobby and out the door to the street."

"I have had three major robberies and my insurer refuses to cover me. I had purchased a property with secure, undercover loading on the plans. Because my OC managers denied me the right to use that access, I was in breach of my contract with the insurer."

"It was revealed at the Tribunal that the car parking indents in the footpath, previously controlled by the council, now belong to my OC. That transfer happened because the council was unable to find the appropriate documents. The super fund can try again to show that unloading property on the street to my lobby – a single glass door – can be achieved safely."

"In early 2020 I initiated an FOI request for council planning documents. After two unsatisfactory, redacted releases, FOI has allowed me to apply to VCAT for disclosure."

"I want to know why the Minister of Planning in 2011 took over management of the Planning Permit and allowed the developer to strike out the word "resident" in so many places. The council verbally blames the minister.

"Sadly, the council had to sign off on whatever was returned to them by the minister for lodging the plan of subdivision."

"The committee here is controlled by a real estate agency that trades and leases apartments on my property while knowing, and failing to

disclose, that the residential goods lift has actually been leased to a third party for 300 years."

Nerrida has told us that the group in control illegally limits the committee to five members. This is the type of chicanery that should be easily defeated without having to mount a massive legal challenge.

Proxy farming crackdown

One comfort for Nerrida and other disaffected residents is that the OC Amendment legislation will proscribe proxy farming and make it harder for vested interests to stack the committee.

Under the *Owners' Corporation and Other Acts Amendments Act (2021)*, a person must not vote as a proxy for more than 5 per cent of the lot owners in large apartment buildings. The Victorian Government says the restriction is intended to prevent the practice whereby an individual gathers as many proxies as possible and "wields an unfair and disproportionate influence."

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to donate, please visit welivehere.net. We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests ●



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Melbourne Fashion Week at Collins Place

Melbourne Fashion Week (M/FW) returns for 2021 for a packed program featuring runways, pop-up experiences, industry talks, workshops, exhibitions and more.

In a celebration of the city's thriving fashion scene, its talented designers, much-loved retail spaces and creative community, Melbourne will come alive from November 15 to 21.

This year, the event takes over multiple stand-out spaces across the entire city for runways – from the deep-sea corridors of Melbourne Aquarium to the dark underbelly of the Melbourne Cricket Ground, witness looks from much-loved designer favourites all to the backdrop of these unique venues. Fashion Capsules return to the M/FW calendar bringing art and fashion together for this series of exhibitions, while free roving pop-up experiences will takeover city streets and laneways to offer an element of surprise, live performance and delight.

Historic Melbourne fashion destination, Collins Place will host a *Fashion Capsule 4*, inspired by Country and our rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultural heritage.

The capsule will showcase works from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island artists, fashion designers and collaborating artists from around the country.

It will feature work from Aunty Beverley Meldrum, Black Cat Couture in collaboration with Papulankutja Art Centre, Iluka Sax-Williams, Jalaru Photography, Moydra Designs, Ngali, Paul McCann and Tiwi Designs by Ossom and Wild Blak Arts. Charlie Digby, founder of Melbourne fashion institution and long-time Collins Place tenant, Digbys, said the M/FW was an incredible opportunity for fashion designers from all corners of the state to show off their wares. "It brings fashion to the fore. Every good city



in the world has a major fashion event and Melbourne is the fashion capital of Australia," Mr Digby said.

"We have been involved under in varying capacities over the years. It is a great way to bring exposure to your brand and also the industry itself." Before founding his business almost 50 years ago, Mr Digby originally had his eyes set on a life in the hospitality industry while looking to purchase a pub, but when none were suitable, he pursued a career in fashion. According to Mr Digby his business operates on a vertical model, meaning they manufacture and sell their own products in all three shops across, made 100 per cent in Australia from imported exclusive fabrics from Italy and France. Although she will not be represented in this year's festival, iconic Melbourne designer, founder of Feathers Boutique and another Collins Place fashion stalwart Margaret Porritt said the festival had a rich history in showcasing the latest trends and fashion must-haves for the seasons to come. "We are always involved in the festival at some capacity, but in this unpredictable world at the moment, we've decided to hold off this year," Ms Porritt said. "I have been in this business for almost 50 years. Growing up immersed in the world of fashion admiring the talents of my milliner mother I naturally evolved into a creative field." "Fashion Week has always been a great opportunity to inspire and be inspired. I get my inspiration from the streets, I used to walk New York, Paris, Hong Kong, street style has always been my inspiration. Now I look to real women creating designs for all shapes and silhouettes."

For more information, visit:
mfw.melbourne.vic.gov.au



Jack Hayes

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TRADER PROFILE

One family's dedication to packaging freshness

For John Tripodi, the QV Nut Co is not just any stall at the Queen Victoria Market. It has been in his family for years and holds a special place in his heart.

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

Originally passed down to his father from his grandfather, the QV Nut Co went from being a fruiterer stall to the health food nut store it is today.

"My father started it nearly 60 years ago. He was at the Queen Victoria Market selling nuts and dried fruits from a young age and then I took over around five years ago," John said.

Seeing the impact his father had in the market, John was more than happy to step into the role and continue the tradition.

And while he is unsure if his children will be interested in following in his footsteps, he is proud of where the store is at and everything his father and himself have achieved.

"There are only a few nut stores in the market, and we really focus on the freshness of our products," he said. "As long as you have the fresh stuff, people come back."

And people have continued to come back due

to the QV Nut Co providing all the staple goods one could need.

Selling everything from raw, roasted and chocolate-covered nuts to dried fruit, legumes and seeds, the stall has a range that is hard to compete with. All packaged and sealed nicely to retain freshness, the stall is well-known at the market.

And the 100 per cent natural peanut butter currently gets John's vote as the crowd favourite.

"Customers love the peanut butter and I make it fresh at the stall," he said.

While John is proud of the products sold in the family business, he acknowledges it has been hard as of late.

"There are a lot of difficulties going on right now but a lot of our regulars will still ring up and place an order. So, we make sure we deliver to them," he said.

As a stall with an appreciation for its customers, QV Nut Co continues to flourish and

encapsulate exactly what the market community is about.

And this is why John is "excited" for the Queen Victoria Market upgrades. Because despite his stall being "moved around a bit", he knows it is all just part of the process in the market reaching its goals as an innovative, fun space to visit in the heart of the city.

Rising above the unpredictable circumstances thrown at him during the past few years, John remains positive and enthusiastic about the future of QV Nut Co.

"We have always been at the Queen Victoria Market. It's all [our family] knows how to do now," he said •

For more information:
qvnutco.wordpress.com



City Life



"He's just an Adam."

Flinders Lane

Coping with the pandemic: From distress to de-stress

Melbourne has been in lockdown more than any other city in the world so far during the COVID-19 pandemic – 267 days by the time major restrictions were lifted after 70 per cent of Victorians aged 16 years and over were fully vaccinated on October 22.

WORDS BY *Arman Rashid*

Notwithstanding the obvious disruption, the Victorian Government has effectively managed to keep infections and deaths at a level that compares favourably with the international experience, although any incidence is regrettable. Australian federal and state governments have now embarked on a four-phase recovery plan to incrementally ease restrictions, reopen the economy and return to normal based on vaccination rates. Though the lockdown will be lifted, there will be ongoing health safety rules stipulating wearing masks, carrying vaccination evidence, and following capacity limits for house visits, indoor recreation and outdoor gathering for the time being.

Melbourne will thankfully be returning to a “new normal” in time for summer. The Victorian Government, front liners and the community have come together to face the pandemic during the past 18 months, but it has come with significant emotional distress arising from health, economic and social impacts of the pandemic. The pandemic stressors have affected every segment of society – for instance, many working adults are worried about job security, young people are worried overall about their future, and children and adolescents are often feeling isolated and lonely after frequent school closures in this period.

Emotional distress

We have to learn to live with the virus as the pandemic becomes an “endemic”. Some degree of stress is unavoidable and inevitable, perhaps even healthy, in this situation. This may bolster

our safety and precaution against the virus (e.g. wearing masks), but how can we prevent stress from becoming disruptive and unmanageable in our lives? There is a higher risk for long-term mental health conditions from the after-effects of the pandemic, which calls for developing self-help coping strategies and seeking professional help based on our needs. In this article, I will share some mental health “self-defence” strategies from my experience in mental health.

Self-defence: De-stress

Here are six practical strategies for you to de-stress from distress in the coming months ...

1. Emotional check-in: It is important to find time for regularly assessing how our minds and bodies react during this period. Sitting with uncomfortable feelings may be helpful in regulating stress instead of sweeping it under the carpet. The first step is for us to tune in, acknowledge and try to understand our feelings – what is causing our stress, what needs to be done and what support do we need? Similarly, check-in with your family members, particularly children, encouraging them to share their feelings by creating a safe space within families. We may not be able to escape stress altogether, but more awareness with earlier responses can help prevent it from spiralling further.
2. Maintaining routines: Following routines can help bring some degree of consistency and stability to cope with uncertainty in the aftermath of the pandemic. Given at least part of the workforce will continue working from home for the time being, virtual workspaces need similar structure with predictable routines, transition from home to work, and adequate breaks in between. Having a routine can also help us in knowing when to “log on” and “log off” in the absence of demarcations between work and home while working from home, while establishing boundaries with colleagues and family members in time allocation. We can reduce the risk of a burnout with the help of healthy routines ensuring a better work-life balance.
3. Meaningful activities: Though life has been disrupted by the pandemic, it can be an opportunity to find activities that give us a renewed sense of purpose in life. Meaningful activities focused on relationships, philanthropy, spirituality, hobbies and other interests can help improve our motivation and spirit in recovering from difficult times. We have seen how quality time with family members can be an important source of strength, while helping others through volunteering can have a positive impact on emotional wellbeing and stress reduction. The specific nature of activities may vary from person to person, but we will come out stronger from this pandemic with more awareness on how we want to spend our time more meaningfully.
4. Self-care: We may often feel overwhelmed with our work, family and social commitments, but the fact is we can carry out our responsibilities and help others only if we help ourselves first. We can take the first step by living a healthier lifestyle, including more consciousness of how food, exercise and sleep affects our emotional wellbeing. Wholesome nutrition with fruits, vegetables and proteins can improve our mood given there is a link between what we eat and how we feel with diet affecting the brain; exercise releases endorphins making us feel happier and reducing anxiety; and, good sleep enhances our concentration, productivity and functioning. Self-care can also be in the form of relaxation and mindfulness activities, which are more accessible online. This is an opportunity to take care of ourselves better during the pandemic- and beyond.
5. (Self) compassion and kindness: We can cope with pandemic stressors better if there is more compassion for ourselves and others in terms of managing expectations, ensuring adaptability and showing kindness. It is important to recognise each of us are going through multiple stressors during the pandemic and we may not be entirely like our “normal” selves in other times. The situation calls for us to be more understanding of ourselves and those around us- colleagues, family, friends and even strangers. More compassion for us and others improves emotional wellbeing by reducing stress, increasing empathy and strengthening relationships.
6. Breaking the stigma: Last but not least, we must break the stigma around mental health. Mental health should be seen positively as a

means to achieve our full potential, cope with stressors and contribute to society. Though the majority of us may be able to cope with self-help strategies discussed above, we must not ignore the need for specialised support from mental health professionals if there is persistent emotional distress. It is important for us to seek help and encourage others to do the same, including support for children who have to bear the brunt of their own stressors along with adults, parents or caregivers during the pandemic. There are various forms of mental health services from helplines to therapy based on our needs.

Final Word

The Chinese word for “danger” is composed of two letters – “crisis” and “opportunity”. If we are more aware about mental health, self-help strategies and professional help resources, we will not only be able to survive the pandemic aftermath but also come out stronger as a society. There is an opportunity for us not to be missed in this situation to lead a more emotionally resilient life with greater meaning, compassion and interconnectedness, while developing healthier environments for dealing with our stressors in the future.



Arman Rashid, PhD, MACA is a member of Residents 3000 Committee. He is a registered counsellor with the Australian Counselling Association •

STATE MP

Making access to the vaccine as easy as possible

Our community is just the best. Victoria is set to become one of the most vaccinated places in the world, and we're doing it at record speed.

But not everyone in the community has the same access to vaccination and information. Some people face additional barriers to getting vaxxed – maybe language barriers, maybe logistical barriers or difficulty accessing the right kind of information.

That's why it's so important to set up culturally appropriate and local community pop-up vax clinics, to help give access to people who might face additional barriers, and make sure people get vaccine information from an organisation or person they already trust.

I recently visited the vaccination clinic at 100 Drummond St Carlton, which is doing exactly this. The pop-up clinic was an initiative of a whole host of community organisations, including Drummond St Services, Cohealth, Queerspace, YSAS, Switchboard, Odyssey House, Transgender Victoria and more.

The clinic welcomed everyone but was especially set up for people who may have found it hard to get a vaccination earlier in the roll-out. I was so pleased to see that dozens of young people from residential rehab and detox services attended the clinic, as well as young people from the nearby public housing towers, and members of our trans community, who already have a relationship with many of the services running the clinic.



It reinforced for me just how important these local on-ground organisations are. They're deeply embedded in and trusted by local communities and that is so important when it comes to conversations around healthcare.

I mentioned in my column last month that staff from Cohealth had also done an amazing job running the Melbourne Town Hall vaccination centre and setting up pop-up vaccination clinics at public housing towers and providing health advice in local languages.

While we know our vaccination rate is improving at a great pace, we also know that our

health system is about to face a huge challenge, with more people in hospital and ICU. Our nurses are simply exhausted, having to work double shifts in full PPE caring for COVID-19 patients, on top of all the work they've done to date.

That's why the Greens and I recently called for the government to provide a bonus payment for healthcare staff working on the front lines of COVID, and I'm really glad the Victorian Government recently introduced this, with a \$60 extra payment per shift for several categories of healthcare workers.

Our vaccination rate in the City of Melbourne is almost certainly a lot higher than the figures the Federal Government releases, since the figures still count international students, temporary migrants and other students who have left the inner city since the pandemic started. But despite this, there is still more we can do to reach those last few percent of people who are yet to be vaccinated. The best way to do that is with services they are already connected to, or in places they already visit, like local shopping areas. You are likely to see more of these “mini pop-ups” over the coming weeks, and it's something I'm working to make sure the government delivers locally at places like Melbourne Central and other shopping centres.

Enjoy your new-found freedoms, Melbourne, and seeing our city spring back into life. You've earned it.

As always, feel free to get in touch •



Ellen Sandell

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Is back pain preventing you from doing the activities you love?

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare around 80 per cent of Australians will suffer from back pain at some point in their lives, affecting their mobility, functional capacity and quality of life.

What causes back pain and why does it recur?

The initial causes of back pain vary greatly but regardless of the cause the result is the same – the pain triggers a natural protective response. The body immediately inhibits the muscles closest to the pain and we modify our movement patterns and posture to avoid painful positions. In as little as 48 hours these important stabilising muscles begin to weaken and atrophy. It is this weakness that leaves us more susceptible to suffering recurring episodes of pain and eventually chronic pain.

“This is the start of what we refer to as a cycle of deconditioning”, physiotherapist Rebecca Heddles said. “For clients, this pain can become a downward spiral of decreasing strength, ongoing instability, recurring pain, impaired function and inevitably loss of quality of life.”

“As a physiotherapist, I see the frustration in clients who seemingly ‘tried everything’ for their back pain. From massages to braces to creams and heat packs, they all seem to temporarily relieve pain, but the pain tends to reoccur if they don’t address the source, which is often muscular weakness in the supporting muscles of the spine.”

Rest and medication offer some immediate relief but do not contribute to long-term recovery and prevention. Hands-on therapy also plays a very valuable role in providing symptomatic relief, however on its own is insufficient for long-term resolution of back pain. While exercise is an essential component of breaking this deconditioning cycle, most exercise programs and equipment cannot specifically target or effectively rehabilitate the deep stabilising muscles of the spine.



The Kieser method is designed to effectively break the cycle of deconditioning using the clinical reasoning and skills of its team of physiotherapists along with their targeted equipment. The Kieser approach is based on the principles of active and early rehabilitation and rebuilding strength where there is weakness. The clinics are equipped with some of the world’s leading rehabilitation equipment, which allows its team to deliver the best possible results for its clients.

Many back pain sufferers report recurrence of pain or injury because they have not found an exercise program they can do safely. At Kieser, your treatment will begin with its physiotherapists who will address your pain and begin your rehabilitation – preparing you for a long-term strength program. Once your pain is reduced, their exercise scientists will prepare your individualised strength training program,

which incorporates activity goals as well as remedial exercises.

The Kieser method is designed to identify and assess the source of your problem and strengthen your body to reduce pain and prevent recurrence of the issue.

Kieser has a clinic 300 metres from Southern Cross Station at the corner of King and Collins streets. Kieser is open for essential face-to-face care with a physiotherapist during lockdown ●

**For more information:
call 9448 9999
or visit kieser.com.au**

MUSIC

Soul kinda feelin’

Renee Geyer, soul singing “gigastar”, sensed that one of her backup singers had something extra. A woman’s intuition.

Many moons later that singer, Kylie Auldlist, has delivered her superb fifth album *This Is What Happiness Looks Like*.

Auldlist is now a certified Formula One R’n’B vocalist. A dozen years ago, when singing with *Cookin’ On 3 Burners*, Kylie Auldlist experienced great recognition and massive success in the UK with the song *This Girl*. North of the Thames it was huge in clubs, and along the English Riviera.

Is It Fun? is one of the standout tracks, as exhilarating as watching Kylian Mbappe score a goal for PSG in the Champions League against RB Leipzig at Parc des Princes.

Auldlist has the style that has the soul glam and glitter of Diana Ross coupled with the sassy blues edge of diva Bessie Smith. As mentioned, early in her career Auldlist was a backing vocalist for Renee Geyer. Twenty feet from superstardom. In 2021 Auldlist is front and centre of a dynamite band and is a soul singing superstar.

In October 2021, Auldlist and her band recorded a live performance for the very cool new music show on Channel 31 Television called *Muuzostream* (with 2U’s).

Muuzostream is a great showcase of great local bands and has already had Kim Salmon and Folk Bitch Trio make appearances. It’s worth checking out.

With her band dressed head to toe in black, Auldlist was in sublime form singing brilliantly, wearing red sneakers, black and white vertical striped leggings like Jock McHale’s Collingwood and a peachy T-shirt with white sleeves.

Auldlist has been nominated for a clutch full of awards at this year’s Music Victoria Awards. Just recently she was interviewed by Northside Records Chris Gill on his awesome Get Down radio show on 3RRR.

Kylie Auldlist and her band have been back at Bakehouse Studios, rehearsing together again, switching on that soul kinda feelin’ sound.

Auldlist of course also sang with the very tasteful, smooth guitarist Lance Ferguson and the Bamboos, one of the best soul R’n’B groups in Victoria. The combo of Auldlist and Ferguson is as effective as Benaud and Davidson, or

Warne and McGrath. Ferguson has also recorded among many luminaries the mighty Tim Rogers of You Am I on a funkified groovy soul project. Dialing in that 6345789 feel.

Auldlist is a high-calibre vocalist, and like Renee Geyer, musos who play with her have to be on their toes. Switched on and on the one. Kylie’s current band is a brilliant bunch of musos on the same page who know she is a gala supreme brilliant bee of a singer.

This Is What Happiness Looks Like is a great, great album and deserves the plaudits and accolades it is receiving. It’s available at Northside Records, Rocksteady Records, (Mitchell House, corner of La Trobe and Elizabeth streets) and all good record stores in the city.

Deborah Conway has given the thumbs up to Vika And Linda Bull’s first album in eight years, called *The Wait*. She described it as a great soundtrack on her walk to St Kilda Pier and back home. Vika and Linda have combined with a bunch of great songwriters like Paul Kelly and Bernard Fanning for this gem of a beautiful soul album.

Friday, November 19 is Aus Music T-Shirt Day. Now is the time to get to your favourite music store and buy a couple of T-shirts to wear on the day.

T-shirts can be memorable, like when Adalita played the St Kilda Festival and one of her bandmates wore an Einsturzende Neubauten T-shirt. Blix Bargeld would have approved.

For Melbourne rock ‘n’ roll fans an authentic Cherry Bar T-shirt could be the answer, or a brilliant Suzie Stapleton *We Are The Plague* themed T-shirt.

Should you have an *Is This Fun?* T-shirt, (should be available at Kylie Auldlist’s gigs) then you are declaring you love Kylie Auldlist’s music.

Keep on rockin’ ... and get those T-shirts happening au-go-go ... ●



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SALVOS

A relationship first model of care

“You just need to stop feeding the homeless. Just stop now. Close it down.” This was the comment made by a prominent City of Melbourne resident to our cleaner two weeks ago.

Let me give you some context. The local resident was upset because he had found some sandwich wrappers and a coffee cup on the footpath outside his apartment. His response?

It was to raise the matter with a man, Peter*, that had previously been rough sleeping in the City of Melbourne. With a decade of intensive support, Peter is now housed in his own apartment and is employed by The Salvation Army Melbourne as a cleaner.

How were we able to initially connect with a man who was wracked with shame and had totally given up and completely withdrawn from society? It was by simply providing a meal. From that initial contact that was established in a park a connection was built between the person and our team.

Over time, many more meals were provided until the person was able to take up the offer of accommodation. Then came some counselling, some training, and an employment opportunity. Then eventually, the person was able to establish himself in his own one-bedroom unit.

To have a prominent local resident saying, “You must stop feeding the homeless” to a person who had their life completely turned around because of an initial contact over a meal, is a complete anathema.

Peter was rocked by the local resident’s comments because it was this very action that had helped completely transform his life.

At the Salvos, we do not engage in a transactional model of care. That would be to simply hand over a meal or a bag of food or directions to accommodation and that would be the end of the contact. That would be about doing something for a person or to a person.

At the Melbourne Salvos we are deeply committed to a relationship first model of care. This is about, first and foremost, recognising the person for who they are – a human being – just like you and me.

It’s about building a connection. It’s about building trust. It’s about building respect and treating people with dignity. It is actually about, “doing life with” the person, not simplistically doing something for them or to them.

Why do we engage in this model of care? Firstly, because we want to enable the

person to have the circumstances, and in fact, themselves be fully transformed. Secondly, we are passionately committed to the relationship first model of care because it actually works and because, in a world that is increasingly fractured, it is desperately needed.

In recent times, I have been connecting with a 38-year-old man, Steven*. Steven had been staying in our cafe overnight because, he told me, he had nowhere else to go. When we found some accommodation for Steven, he was reluctant to take up the offer. I later found out why.

Steven said that he now lived in a one-bedroom flat. He is enjoying being in his own place, but he deeply misses being with friends in the Salvos cafe.

Steven said to me, “Do you know what my biggest, most scary issue is? It’s loneliness. It’s actually killing me. The only time anyone speaks to me is when I go to Coles. The checkout person asks me if I want a receipt, I say, ‘no thanks’, and that’s it. Sometimes I’ll get a takeaway pizza delivered and the delivery guy tells me to have a good week and I say ‘yeah, you too.’”

Then Steven said, “Oh, the only other time I speak with someone is when I catch up with you, Brendan, for a coffee or a meal at the Salvo’s cafe at Bourke St.”

Steven’s story is one of many who are overwhelmed with a deep sense of loneliness. One of the very few times that loneliness is broken for them is when they set foot in the Salvo’s cafe at Bourke St.

Next time you feel inconvenienced by a coffee cup or a sandwich wrapper being left outside your apartment and you do all you can to close a service for the city’s most vulnerable, please remember that you may well be cutting off the final vestige of hope and connection for a cohort who are heartbreakingly disconnected from mainstream society, are overwhelmed with loneliness and simply have no-one or anything else other than the Salvo’s cafe on Bourke St.

*Names have been changed ●

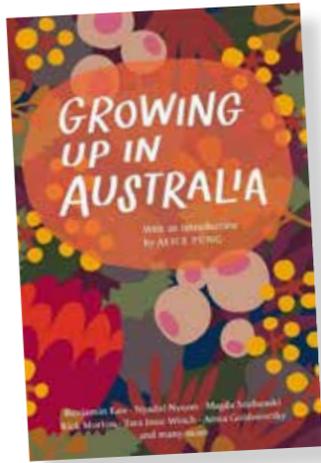


Major Brendan Nottle

COMMANDING OFFICER
OF THE SALVATION ARMY
MELBOURNE - PROJECT 614

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SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU

CRITIC



▲ Growing up in Australia, edited by Alice Pung, Black Inc, 2021.

On becoming an Aussie

There are three stand-out stories in Growing Up in Australia, an anthology of first-person accounts by 32 Aussies.

The first is *Tourism* by Benjamin Law, perhaps the most talented storyteller in the mix.

For the book is making the point that there is no such thing as a “proper” childhood and the Law family’s obsession with theme parks fits the bill.

The second standout story is *Easter, 1969* by Katie Bryan, with the best and the most painful material.

Perhaps it is the recognition of these painful moments of difference in childhood that turn us into adults.

The third standout story is *Wei-Lei and Me* by Aditi Gouernal, with its brilliant eye for cultural difference and her ability to shape the difference between the grandeur of New Delhi and the brown hills of Canberra into a dramatic tale.

There are accounts by people with overbearing fathers, deformed spines, breast cancer in teenagehood and forced riding lessons but nothing beats Gouernal’s account of her beating a tormenter over the head with a cricket bat.

Law is a comedian and screenwriter whose series *New Gold Mountain* has just been shown on SBS, Bryan is of indigenous descent from Western Australia and Gouernal is from Mumbai and working on a novel in the United States.

The challenge for the reader is to find a common thread in the narration and it appears to be that the prevailing culture in Australia is (or was) of British descent and repressed.

Bryan’s mum kept her away from her fun-loving relatives, preferring her to visit a respectable “old stick” on a nearby station and *Easter, 1969* tells of the excruciating lengths her father went to keep her mother from knowing about his indigenous roots.

The sheer truth of the pain in *Easter, 1969* is quite difficult for the reader to bear.

This is the seventh in the *Growing Up in Australia* anthologies released by Black Inc and in *Wei-Lei and Me*, the narrator sums it up.

“At night we would sit on scrappy vinyl-covered chairs in a bar called The Phoenix and after a couple of beers, rant about how we hated homogeneity and longed for difference. We had become what we thought we would never be: Australian.” ●



Rhonda Dredge
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SKYPAD LIVING

“Live Melbourne Campaign” for vertical villages ... or short-stays

December is traditionally move-out-month in our vertical villages – but if the City of Melbourne has its way, we may see many more move-ins!

Few would have escaped noticing our many empty shop fronts, and the impacts of these vacancies are well known.

From a consumer perspective, many retail vacancies signal less choice and a duller shopping experience. And this negativity tends to feed upon itself – with people not going there because people aren’t there. Visual decay then follows, marked by closure signs, graffiti and litter. To halt this spiral, business associations and local councils often initiate “shop-front” programs, typically offering rent-free periods for artists or fledgling enterprises.

Regrettably, this is not the only high vacancy rate confronting the City of Melbourne.

Residential apartment vacancies are also worrying.

And while empty apartments may not be as obvious as empty shopfronts, apartment vacancies also bring spiralling impacts. For just as the shoppers’ experience dulls with retail vacancies, so too the residents’ experience suffers when apartment buildings empty. The absence of neighbours and associated reduced services promote a sense of isolation (“will anyone hear me scream?”). Additionally, large concentrations of vacancies bring financial stresses. Unpaid owners’ corporation fees lead to reductions in expenditure, with garden maintenance and minor repairs being early cutbacks. Over

time, this signals vulnerability and becomes an unintended invitation to the unauthorised.

The good news is that the City of Melbourne is paying attention to our high residential vacancy rates and in their *Bounce Back Event* (October 21) announced a “Live Melbourne Campaign”.

While details are scant, it appears that the City of Melbourne will be promoting the advantages of living in the city – and likely this will centre around the benefits of being close to all that the city has to offer. While agreeing this aim, it is hoped that proximity is not the only feature promoted. Rather, it is hoped that, along with the benefits of location, that the *Live Melbourne Campaign* will promote our high-rise lifestyle and all this has to offer, including community. Indeed, and as has been highlighted by Residents 3000 (the residents’ association for Melbourne CBD), it has been the residents and their shared connections that have weathered COVID-19, stopping the inner city from becoming a real ghost town.

It is of importance, then, that the type of lived experience promoted by the campaign is a holistic residential experience, and not the more transactional short-stay experience. This would not be welcomed by the likes of We Live Here, nor by residents who want to see our vertical villages strengthened by fellow residents,

rather than used by visitors.

So, assuming this campaign is about attracting new residents (rather than short-stayers), might we see rent-free trials (akin to the shop-front program) or, and more likely, vouchers for local experiences? But perhaps the council could be encouraged to include some specific value-adds designed to ease the transition into this new vertical lifestyle. By means of example, “deals could be done” regarding furnishings (as we all know the challenges here!). Perhaps discounts with furniture subscription services, such as Breeze Furniture, an Australian company which lets customers rent, keep or swap homewares on three- or six-month subscriptions.

But whatever the package, the residents’ associations – Residents 3000, Southbank Residents’ Association and Docklands Representative Group – will be taking a very keen interest in the *Live Melbourne Campaign* ●



Dr Janette Corcoran
APARTMENT LIVING EXPERT
LEARN MORE ON FACEBOOK.COM/
SKYPADLIVING/

STREET ART

Artists don’t work for free

Many of Melbourne’s most important lanes are being annexed by developers for giant commercial development projects. At the moment they are usurping Union Lane into a shopping complex.

Union Lane has been a great space for younger artists to cut their teeth in a public space, it runs between Little Collins St and Bourke Street Mall. Presgrave Place, famous for its sculptures and objects, has had half of its artwork destroyed as it is being refitted into a new building. And now there are plans to turn one side of the Blender Lane into a 40-storey apartment block. Blender Lane was the laneway that ran alongside the Blender Studios for 17 years.

It’s really sad and annoying that the people who take away Melbourne’s cultural heritage to create large-scale development for profits, are mostly from foreign owned conglomerates who leave the city a little less special, taking their money and running. Anyway, that’s not what this article is about, I would like to talk about exploiting artists.

As an artist I am constantly being contacted by people who want me to work for free. It was something that happened more when I was young and less established. It’s weird with art, that people not only ask you to do it for free, but they also want to have so much input (all you need is VCE art and you’re an expert.) You wouldn’t call an electrician, tell them to work for free, and then tell them how to do it.

Over the years I have had many people contact me to create fine art or street art at their house, in their café, garage or adjoining lane. The most common phrases I get are, “it will



be good exposure for you” or, “It will give you a chance to practice, besides you already do it illegally for free.”

Artists don’t get valued in our society the way they deserve. Artists give up a secure life to chase a life of creativity. They take a risk and make a choice to live with potential poverty. A choice most people would not be brave enough to make. Some people might not see this choice as brave, but to chase your dream in any capacity means you love what you do, so you never work a day in your life. Artists have made a substantial contribution in branding Melbourne as a cool and creative city. There are galleries, studios, live music and comedy venues all adding to the creative culture of Melbourne.

It’s very hard to articulate a currency of culture. It is clear that art and street art has rebranded Melbourne and thousands of people come to Melbourne to go to the NGV or go on a street art tour. It has created a currency, but it is very hard to articulate. The truth is most of the people that benefit from the art and street art around Melbourne are not the artists. With studio rents going up and jobs becoming

very competitive in such a creative city, it is important that we take care and ensure that the creatives of Melbourne are not exploited.

If you need a mural or some art, now is a good time as we artists need work. Go see a gig or some comedy. But ensure you pay a fair amount for the service you receive. And please don’t ask for a freebie.

Artists don’t want to work for free, they need to be paid the same as everyone else. We don’t need the opportunity or the exposure. We need understanding and equality.

So, please have a bit of empathy for artists, their contribution, and their journey.

Stay awesome, and feel free to check out my website: doylesart.com
Doyle ●



Adrian Doyle
ADRIAN DOYLE IS THE BLENDER STUDIOS
LEARN MORE ON
THEBLENDERSTUDIOS.COM

女王市场的新图书馆

具有标志性的维多利亚女王市场区域即将迎来一个带有屋顶露台的全新社区图书馆，希望它能尽早在2023年开放。

Brendan Rees

墨尔本市政议员在10月12日的会议上一致通过了一项提议，建造一座三层楼的图书馆，成为市政耗资7000万澳元新社区中心的一部分。

新图书馆将有一个屋顶露台，用于户外阅读和活动、新的社区空间、会议室、一个商业厨房和一个礼堂。

五层高的社区中心已经于9月竣工，是耗资4.5亿澳元Munro开发项目的重要组成部分。

根据市政议会的一份报告，该项目将成为家庭服务、共享工作空间和经济适用房的所在地，其装修费用预计在1200万至1400万澳元之间。

市长Sally Capp表示，城市北部的这个图书馆将改善居民获取使用并激活这个不断增长的区域。

她说：“到2040年，我们预计该区域将有24000名新居民，因此我们希望提供额外的社区设施，以满足不断增长的人口需求。”

“Munro社区中心的位置将使当地居民更容易获得图书馆服务，同时也推动对该区域的访问并鼓励其创造力和创新。”

市长Capp表示，市政最近对该场地的计划审查发现，托儿设施并不是“最适合使用该空间的地方”。

“2014年市政首次制定Munro计划时，本市北部的当地居民和上班族对托儿服务的需求很高。新数据表明，这一需求目前已由



非营利和私有的托儿机构所填补。”
根据创意墨尔本投资组合负责人Jamal

Hakim 议员的说法，在疫情大流行之前，每年有150万人访问墨尔本市的图书馆。



电动巴士改善市区空气质量

David Schout

沿 Lonsdale 街行驶的一些有害柴油巴士公交车将可望于2022年6月被电动巴士所取代，此举将减少CBD的空气污染。

在接下来的九年内，有341辆电动和混合动力公交车将被引入大都市公交网络，其中在2022年上半年投入5辆。

以上承诺是维州政府与总部位于墨尔本的 Kinetic 公司于10月宣布的一项价值23亿澳元合同项目的一部分，该合同将运营三分之一的大都市公交网络，接管目前的运营商 Transdev。

尽管州政府尚未确认具体的零排放或低排放的路线，但Lonsdale街沿线行驶的16条路线中的一些可能会出现在推广的最初阶段。Lonsdale街是墨尔本市区最繁忙的公共汽车路线。

Kinetic 承诺到2025年中期将引入36辆全电动公交车。

今年早些时候的一份报告显示，Lonsdale街每天有1000多辆公交车行驶，公交车排放的柴油烟雾是市区空气质量的一个重要因素，此举对CBD当地人来说是一个受欢迎的举措。

在向州政府提交的关于空气污染对健康影响的调查中，墨尔本市政表示应优先考虑繁忙的公交巴士路线。

调查报告指出：“将Lonsdale街公交车路线改造成零排放，将是朝着减少城市空气污染迈出的重要一步。”

“公共汽车使用的柴油燃料和排放与人类的癌症、心肺损伤以及精神功能受损有关。”

作为新合同项目的一部分，在2031年中之前，537辆公交车中有近三分之二将被低排放或零排放车辆取代。

市政计划重振城市活力

Brendan Rees

根据一项雄心勃勃的计划，中央商务区(CBD)空置的店面将成为过去，市政为振兴这座城市想方解决尽可能多的空间。

墨尔本市政首席执行官Justin Hanney在10月份的一次房地产委员会研讨会上表示，市政的目标是“尽可能多地”填满空置的商店，即使是短期的，“我们确实在思考如何激活这座城市并保持其活力”。

Hanney先生说，在疫情大流行之前，CBD商店的空置率是5%，但现在可能达到20%。

他说：“五分之一的空置率，还不算严重”。“但有几条街的情况很糟糕，如Elizabeth街，那里10家商店中有6家空置，其外观和感觉都很凄凉。”

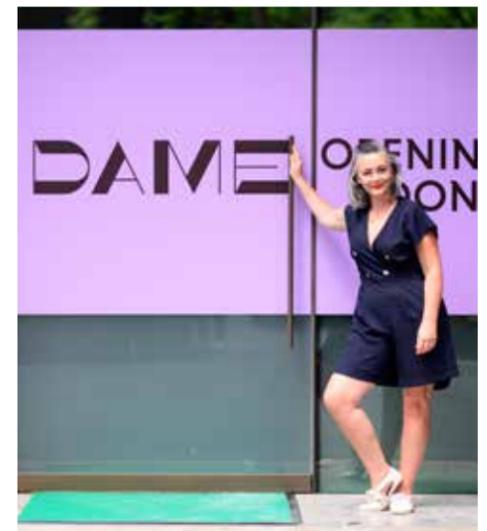
“我们说的是按月出租，来激活这些空置店面，房东或业主可以在任何时间点收回它们，所以这不是长期租赁，而是我们要尽可能让这些空置店面有用。”

在10月份提交给市政议员的一份报告中指出，“本市的某些区域面临着长期衰败的风险”。Hanney先生承诺将利用空置的店面，因为它们正在遭受毁灭性封锁的打击。

报告称：“为了确保危机后的强劲复苏，至关重要是要为游客感受充满活力和令人兴奋的零售、餐饮和娱乐体验。”

墨尔本市长Sally Capp说，市政府正在与当地艺术家、企业家、区域协会、房地产行业 and 房东业主合作，转变本市的空置店面。

她说：“我们正在利用艺术、表演、新零售弹出式广告、创业活动，甚至社区广播电台，在空荡荡的店面里创造生动的装饰，重点是Docklands港区、Lygon街和中央商务区。”



开启城市旅游的“墨尔本钥匙”

墨尔本市政设想了整个城市体验的“游戏化”活动计划，新的景点和体验通行证将为墨尔本饱受摧残的旅游、零售和餐饮业注入活力。

Spencer Fowler Steen

这项为期12周被称为“墨尔本钥匙”的计划，旨在最大限度地提高封锁后的游客量，支持旅游业，并对零售和餐饮业产生积极影响。

市政议员Roshena Campbell说，对于

一个经历了六次封锁的城市来说，我们的旅游业被疫情“摧毁”，这并不惊奇。

她在10月19日的未来墨尔本委员会会议上表示：“我想在很多方面都有这种感觉，但最明显的一点是过夜游客的减少，这座城市曾经是游客选择的目的地。在上一个财政年度里，我们已经看到下降了66%。”

“我们知道，市政能做的是如何从这场疫情中恢复过来，最重要的是要让游客回到这座城市来，墨尔本始终能让人们有绝佳机会来体验，但由于封城已经错过了很久。”

“墨尔本钥匙”计划将重新确立这座城市作为首选目的地的地位，并通过包装墨尔本动物园、墨尔本水族馆和Docklands港区目的地等体验来吸引人们回到这座城市。

该计划将通过每天、每周和活动结束的奖品来补贴营业成本并进行游戏化。额外的资金将通过引人注目的报价分散到零售和

餐饮业。

市议员Elizabeth Doidge表示，她支持这个倡议，并欢迎这个有机会了解和关注我们城市的潜在方法。

“对我来说，墨尔本钥匙计划比让人们进城更进了一步。”

“该计划不仅将整个城市的主要体验打包成营业销售或类似的东西，而且具有游戏化的元素，这样非常吸引那些在我们城市的旅游和探访中扮演重要角色的家庭。”

What's on: November 2021



MELBOURNE BOOK MARKET

Weekends 10am-4pm

The Melbourne Book Market at Queen Vic Market offers a curated collection of more than 5000 new and pre-loved titles, every Saturday and Sunday.

qvm.com.au



FLASH FORWARD LANEWAY FEST

Ongoing

Flash Forward is the epic new creative program taking over 40 city laneways with music, murals and more from the best local talent. For more information visit:

whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au

THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH @ 10AM

EastEnders meet-ups

Representing residents living in the CBD's eastern quadrant, EastEnders host monthly meetings at the Gorman Room, 27 Little Lonsdale St. For more information contact president Stan Capp.

eastendersinc@gmail.com

SHRINE KIDS

A free self-guided program for families with primary school-aged children. Four different activity cards provide a starting point for fresh perspectives of Shrine. Children are asked to consider and conjure their creative responses to a range of questions.

shrine.org.au

TUESDAYS VIA ZOOM @ 7.40AM

Rotary Club of Central Melbourne

Due to the necessity to remain out of public spaces where possible, Rotary continues its Zoom breakfast meetings until a decision is made to return to face-to-face meetings.

rotaryclubcentralmelbourne.org.au

WALKING WITH NEIGHBOURS - LAST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

Residents 3000 hosts monthly walks around the CBD and surrounding areas each month on Thursday evenings at 6pm. For meeting times and information contact:

walks@residents3000.com.au



LANEWAY LEARNING

Cheap, fun classes in anything and everything. Weekday evenings in cafes, bars and other spaces around Melbourne. Classes usually have about 20 people to keep it friendly. Online classes available.

melbourne.lanewaylearning.com



NEIGHBOURHOOD GARDEN CLUB SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

Hosted by Residents 3000, come at 4pm for one hour at Green Room, L1 Central House, Baptist Place Laneway and enjoy a range of different gardening activities with your neighbours.

gardenclub@residents3000.com.au

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James Flynn
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Donazzan Boutique Property

Gina, Kim and their team are fierce supporters of local CBD businesses and their owners. As a Melbourne owned and based company ourselves, we encourage you all to join us in supporting our local businesses. As we emerge from lockdown, make sure to come and say hello, dine in our wonderful restaurants and shop at our local retailers.

Let's see our beloved Melbourne's beautiful heart start beating again. We love you Melbourne.



From L to R: Suzie Inglis, Donazzan Boutique Property; Guy Grossi, Grossi Florentino; Carmel Dwyer, Mitty's Newsagency; Caterina Borsato, Caterina's Cucina E Bar; Maggie Kinross, The Road Stall; Rafael Camillo, Residents 3000 President; Sebastian Giacobello, American Tailors; Gina Donazzan & Kim Davey, Directors of Donazzan Boutique Property, Simon Hartley, Becco.

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